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MEMOIRS

OF THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

VOL. II.

Princess Lamballe
in Banishment.
From an original painting in the possession of the Editor.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW,

LADY OF HONOUR TO CATHERINE II.

EMPRESS OF ALL THE RUSSIAS:

WRITTEN BY HERSELF:

COMPRISING

LETTERS OF THE EMPRESS,

AND OTHER CORRESPONDENCE.

EDITED FROM THE ORIGINALS,

BY MRS. W. BRADFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

CHAPTER I.

Princess Dolgorouky—Departure of the Princess Daschkaw into exile—Painful anticipations—A spy—Travelling perils—A hurricane—A narrow escape—The governor of T'wer—An exposure—An unlooked-for messenger—A surprise—Fears of the princess for her son—She arrives at her place of exile—Description of it—New alarms for her son—The Emperor Paul—Characteristic ceremony—Affecting reception of the princess by her peasantry.

My friend Princess Dolgorouky was no common-place sort of character, but a woman eminently distinguished both for her good sense and good conduct, and peculiarly dear to me from the sincerity and cordiality of her friendship. She actively set to work, from the moment of her arrival, in devising and arranging the means of my future comfort and accommodation, packing up with her own hands a variety of such things as would contribute not only to render my residence in a peasant's

cabin tolerable, but as agreeable as circumstances could possibly permit. In my presence she made every effort to cheer me, and to suppress her own feelings at my situation; but her tears, when she could give way to them unobserved, did not cease to flow. On the evening of my departure, with the assistance of my maid's arm I was enabled to totter into her apartment, where I found her in an agony of grief.

Embracing her tenderly, and reproaching her for not sufficiently exerting the strength of mind with which nature had gifted her, I bade her take comfort in the reflection, that before twenty-four hours had passed away, either my painful existence would be brought to a close, or if, on the contrary, Heaven had reserved me for still further trials, and at the end of a few stages I was not brought back a corpse, she might rest assured that the act of travelling, and change of air, had endued me with new strength, and that I might still live to rejoice again in her society.

The latter was partially accomplished. I returned from exile, and again had the happiness of seeing her; but two years had scarcely passed when a premature death brought her to the grave, and left me for the rest of my days to deplore the loss of a sensible and sincere friend.

On the day of my departure, the 26th of December, 1796, as I could not move without assistance, I had myself supported and conducted to

church; and having dissuaded my friends, and prohibited my servants who remained behind, from depriving me of the little strength of mind I had left with the pain of giving and receiving adieux, I was placed in my kibitka the moment the service was ended, and thus commenced a journey to I knew not whither, indifferent as to my destiny, and to the reports, which had lately been renewed, that at a certain point the route I was taking would be suddenly changed, and I conveyed to imprisonment in a distant and solitary cloister.

Nothing, however, of this latter circumstance happened, and I found myself day by day recovering my former strength. The apprehensions of my friends at the thoughts of my travelling in a kibitka,* to which I had never been accustomed, were equally groundless; the motion and exercise not only contributed to allay my rheumatic pains, but to restore the tone of my stomach, and give me an appetite for food.

At the end of our first day's journey, M. Laptoff perceiving the peasant of the cabin where we slept in conversation with a person who had passed and regarded us on the road with some curiosity, begged to know who he was.

Our host, who was a little in liquor, replied that he scarcely knew what to make of him, for once he had declared himself to be a follower of the princess,

* A half-open carriage, on low sledges in winter; and in summer, on wheels without springs, and very inconvenient.

"and just now," added he, "he has taken upon himself to order me into the princess's apartment, with an air of authority, to see if she be really there."

Laptoff, immediately turning to the stranger, demanded, with his usual warmth, what his business with the princess was, and how he dared to send any one into her chamber to disturb her repose. The fellow, with too little ambiguity for one of his profession, soon gave us reason to believe him to be a spy on our proceedings, under the orders, not of the emperor, but of M. Archaroff; and fearful, at the same time, lest I should be made acquainted with the circumstance, he cautioned M. Laptoff, with an attempt at a menacing tone, against speaking to me on such a subject, at the peril of being answerable for the consequences.

After our first day's journey, and before we reached the town of Twer, we were two several times in imminent danger of perishing, especially in the latter instance of the two, when a hurricane, which blew up the snow, and left no trace of a road, reduced us to the necessity of wandering for seventeen hours in total ignorance of our way. Not a vestige of any human habitation was to be seen; and as night came on, our jaded horses were scarcely able to move. To be buried in the snow, to be frozen to death, or to be devoured by wild beasts, were the only ideas which offered themselves to our terrified imaginations, and one or the other of these extre-

mities seemed inevitable. Our servants gave up all for lost; some fell into tears, and some put up their prayers for mercy.

I ordered the coachman not to attempt to proceed, but to wait with patience till the morning dawned, when the wind, I imagined, would probably abate, and the horses being able to proceed, we might seek some human dwelling, and thence regain our road.

In less than an hour the coachman fancied that he saw a glimmering of light at a distance. Having directed one of my most efficient servants to the point whence the light seemed to proceed, he hastened to approach it, and in half an hour returned with the pleasing intelligence that we were not far from a small range of cabins. We urged our poor beasts forward step by step, and at length found ourselves and horses safely lodged, and thus preserved from a horrible and perhaps lingering death.

It appeared that we had gone considerably out of our way, and in nineteen or twenty hours had made but six versts on our journey. On our arrival at Twer we were most agreeably surprised at finding an excellent lodging provided for us by the governor, M. Polikarpoff. This worthy man came immediately to visit me; and on expressing my sense of gratitude for his attention, and my fears lest so much kindness shewn to a proscribed person might injure him in the eyes of a vindictive monarch, his reply was, "I know not, madam, what may have passed in any private communication between his

majesty and yourself; but of this I am certain, that no ukase has been published proclaiming your banishment, and I must therefore beg permission to act towards you as I am prompted by the very sincere respect I have ever felt for your character, since I first imbibed any knowledge of right and wrong." The town of Twer was at that moment full of the guards, on their march to Moscow for the coronation, which did not deter the kind-hearted governor from sending us an excellent supper from his table.

The next morning we continued our route; and as we travelled with the same horses, our daily journeys were necessarily short—seldom more than sixty versts, and usually less.

At Krasnoicholm we had the good fortune, also, to find in the principal authority a well-bred and obliging person. This was M. Krowse, the seneschal, a nephew of the celebrated physician of that name, through whose polite consideration we derived a supply of provisions, which the villages and cabins which we had to pass would not have afforded. After a few hours sleep, and rest for our horses, at the above-mentioned place, we next morning pursued our journey at an early hour.

During this day we had proof sufficient, if any still were wanting, that our attendant spy, of whom I have spoken, and who never long lost sight of us, was unequivocally the agent of the younger Archaroff, and that he kept a journal, for the informa-

tion of his employer, of all that passed in our wandering colony.

This Archaroff was charged by the emperor with the duty and power of an inquisitor—an office far from repugnant to a soul like his, mean and servile, and absolutely divested of every sentiment of humanity. M. Laptoff having entered the cabin which our spy had just quitted, observed a letter, addressed to M. Archaroff, inadvertently left open on the table, and forgotten. In this we found mention of my indisposition, of Laptoff being still with me, and of another circumstance, inserted, probably, to give variety to his narrative,—namely, that one of my servants had stolen a peasant's pelisse—a thing highly improbable, as they all had been clad with new ones at my expense on commencing the journey, whilst the writer's follower, by-the-bye, seemed very much in need of one.

After this, we always took the precaution of opening the trap-doors of the cabins where we lodged, which the peasants have in their floors, by which they descend into the cellars,—to assure ourselves that the commissioner of M. Archaroff was not an unseen auditor of our conversations.

I had soon a source of real disquietude and fear, on a different subject, which was not entirely allayed until after my return to Troitskoe, when I received the assurances of my brother, and other friends, that what I am going to relate did not expose my son to the fury of the emperor. After arriving at Wessei-

gotsky I had a visit from the newly-appointed seneschal, and at the same time from the respectable person, his predecessor, who had received his appointment at the hands of the late empress, in recompence of military services, and nine wounds incurred in fighting the battles of his country, and who was just displaced by Paul the First, to make room for the cousin of M. Aracktchieff, one of the most faithful and approved agents of his tyranny.

The injustice thus done to the worthy officer was naturally a subject to him of the bitterest complaint; and though, with great sympathy in his case, I had exhausted every topic of consolation which it admitted, I could not succeed one moment in directing his thoughts or conversation to any point but the wrongs he had sustained. At length I hit on the expedient of requesting them both to conduct my daughter and Miss Bates to the fair, at that time reputed the most considerable in the empire. They had scarcely left the house when a military officer appeared in my apartment, and presented me with a letter. It was from my son, who had commissioned the bearer to deliver it to me in person, and, after thus assuring himself of the state of my health, to proceed to Korotowa, the place of my exile, with instructions to the villagers to receive me as their mistress, and then to return to him with an account of his mission.

Had a thunderbolt burst over my head I could not have been more shocked than I was at the mode of

this communication. I was aware of the emperor's unbending strictness on certain points of military etiquette, and that he had visited Princes Souvaroff and Repnin with the most severe public reprimand, simply for having made choice of officers for conveying their despatches to him; and for thus transgressing an imperial edict in sending by an officer a letter to me, to one proscribed, and evincing an interest paramount to his military obedience, I pictured my son exposed to unrelenting persecution, and already dragged into Siberia.

I eagerly demanded of the officer if he had been seen in the town, and if he had not met the seneschal by the way. He assured me he had not. I conjured him instantly to set off for Korotowa, from which we then were only thirty-three versts distant, where I should soon be ready to converse with him; but his quitting the town without a moment's delay, and leaving it unseen, were things, I repeated, of the very first importance.

As soon as my party returned from the fair we got into our carriages, and late at night reached the spot pointed out by the emperor for my future place of abode.

My cabin I found sufficiently large; the one opposite was destined for the kitchen, and the best in the adjoining street was prepared for my daughter.

I lost no time in sending for M. Schriedman, the officer who had been dispatched to me by my son; and soon after he left me I learned, to my inexpres-

sible terror, from one of the servants, that he had not only publicly shewn himself, but that, through his own stupidity and foolhardiness, he had absolutely made himself and his errand known to the seneschal of the town we had just left, who in consequence had demanded and taken possession of his passport.

Night or day I had now no repose, for even in my dreams the image of my son banished into Siberia was perpetually before my eyes. I wrote to my brother and to other friends to entreat they would send me news of my son; but I did not dare wholly to confide in the assurances they gave me of his perfect safety, until I afterwards found that he was really appointed to the command of a regiment.

The Emperor Paul evinced at intervals some sense of justice; and there were moments when he betrayed something like sagacity, and even nobleness of mind. He heard, through the seneschal, of M. Schriedman's journey, without any symptoms of displeasure at my son's conduct; and when informed, as he afterwards was on my return to Troitskoe, through the reports of M. Archaroff, that many of my friends had visited me in exile, "Nothing," said he, "can be more natural; it is the very time to shew friendship or gratitude towards Princess Daschkaw, for those who are bound to her by those ties."

With respect to such things as regarded my per-

sonal comfort in a state of banishment, I was easy and contented. My cabin was large, and much better than I expected to have found it. It is true my three *femmes-de-chambre* shared my bedchamber during the night; but, thanks to their attention, their consideration, and their neatness, added to the foresight of Miss Bates, who had provided a large green baize curtain to serve as a screen between me and my servants under any such contingency, I felt no inconvenience.

A little ceremony took place on my arrival at Korotowa, which I will mention, because it presents a sort of national picture, and, from the peculiar circumstances I was in, extremely affected me at the moment. It is the custom in Russia for the great lords of the soil, at the end of a journey, to go directly to church, where a *Te Deum* is sung, as an act of thanksgiving for their safety; after which the priests usually present themselves at the mansion of the noble, to offer their congratulations on his return, and to give him a solemn blessing with the cross in their hands—a ceremony which is met by the noble first kissing the cross, and then the hands which bear it. According to this custom, soon after I had alighted from my carriage, the priest came to the cabin where I was lodged, and after having pronounced his benediction in the manner I have described, in place of giving me his hand, he entreated me, with tears in his eyes, to give him mine to kiss. "It is not your rank, my mo-

ther," said he, "that I respect, but it is the fame of your virtues, which has penetrated even into this remote corner. I speak to you in the name of all the inhabitants of this village. Your son is a good master, because you have educated him well, and in that consists the secret of our happiness. It is to you a misfortune which brings you amongst us, and therefore we regret it; but to us it is a blessing to behold you, for in seeing you we behold our guardian angel."

I had been fatigued, and was very weak; but this unexpected, this *naïf*, unstudied expression of attachment from these poor peasants, whom I had never known, at a moment when I was prepared to be, and in a place, where I was sent to be, completely wretched, gave rise to a sensation of real happiness, and so overpowered me, that I could only answer by interrupting the worthy priest, and embracing him as a friend. My friends, who were affected to tears by this scene, told me afterwards, that never in the midst of my prosperity had I inspired them with so much respect and veneration as at that moment.

CHAPTER II.

M. Laptoff—The emperor's opinion of him—The princess states her case to Prince Repnin—The oath of allegiance—Discontent of the peasantry—Symptoms of revolt—A secret missive from Prince Repnin to the princess—Painful interview—Punishment by torture—Amusements in exile—The princess writes to the empress—Solicits the emperor—His rage at the tone of the princess's letter—He relents, through the intercession of Mlle. Nelidoff and the youngest Grand Duke Michael—A messenger of joy—Illness of Miss Bates—Preparations for returning to Troitskoe—Conduct of the peasantry to the princess.

My first care, the day after our arrival, was to send back M. de Laptoff, on whose account I had experienced continual apprehensions, but happily was spared the anguish of his falling a victim to his unbounded gratitude and attachment. The emperor, on hearing that he had followed me into exile, exclaimed, in high commendation, " This is none of your petticoated youths; here's a man who knows how to wear breeches!"—a favourite expression with his majesty when he wished to mark his admiration of a spirited character.

The battalion of chasseurs, of which Laptoff had the command, was one of those lately reduced; but

the emperor gave him another regiment, and soon afterwards presented him with the cross of the order of Malta.

Whilst at Twer, on my journey to Korotowa, I had written to my cousin Prince Repnin, with the wish of ascertaining the alleged grounds of my offence; at the same time appealing to his knowledge of the sentiments which governed me in the reign of Peter the Third, and the testimony he was enabled to afford, both to the emperor and to all the well-disposed people in the country, that in no one action had I ever in view the ambition of any personal advancement, or the criminal elevation of my own family. I named the village to which I was banished for a term quite undefined, and pointed out certain members of the academy, on whose fidelity and attachment I could rely, as persons into whose hands an answer to my letter could be safely confided, until I had the opportunity of dispatching a peasant to Petersburg, to receive and convey it, along with others, to my place of exile.

A circumstance which I will mention, arising out of a new measure of the emperor, facilitated the means of obtaining a reply to this letter. The oath of allegiance had hitherto only regarded the nobles; the rest of the community,—that is to say, the military, those employed in the civil as well as other services, and the peasants, as appertaining to the nobles,—were not required to take the oath; but, by I know not what caprice, it was ordered that every

person, including the peasantry, should take the oath of allegiance to Paul the First.

This unprecedented measure caused a great ferment throughout the country. The peasants conceived that they no longer belonged to their respective nobles; and whole villages in several of the governments began to revolt, choosing neither to work for their masters nor to pay their rents. The emperor was soon obliged to employ his troops to put down this spirit of rebellion, which in one estate, belonging to M. Apraxin and Princess Galitzin, whose maiden name was Chernicheff, had broken out in so obstinate and alarming a manner as made it necessary to fire cannon on the deluded people, many of whom fell victims to the error into which the ill-judged measure of the emperor had plunged them.

The spirit thus originally excited had in some districts been kept alive and fomented by certain underling clerks of the chancery—a description of persons the most mischievous in the empire,—who went busying themselves through the villages of the great proprietors, and persuading the poor, ignorant peasants, that if they once declared themselves the property of the emperor, they were henceforth released from all ties to their former masters.

To what extent this nefarious system was carried I am not able to say; but two of this worthless gang had spread their doctrine throughout the whole government of Archangel, and the northern part of

that of Novogorod; and just before my arrival at Korotowa they had been tampering with the peasants of my son, promising, for a small sum of money, to place them securely under a better master; a proposition which was met in this instance with indignation, the peasants declaring themselves far happier in their present condition than any of those belonging to the crown.

This state of things forced the emperor to send Prince Repnin into these two disturbed provinces. There was on his journey a town near the village where I was confined, which he had to pass, and thence he sent me a letter, confided to the care of the priest of the parish, who promised to obey his strict injunction of secrecy, and carefully to convey it to me. The priest punctually executed his commission, and in the following manner:—One day, as I was looking out of my window, I perceived an ecclesiastic, whom I did not know, advancing directly towards my cabin steps. I immediately moved to the door, and had not descended the steps when the stranger approached, who, placing my cousin's letter in my hands, bade me hope the best from Divine Providence, and then disappeared.

Prince Repnin expressed his unhappiness at his utter want of power to render me the smallest assistance, and could only counsel me to write to the empress, praying her intercession in my behalf with the emperor. My repugnance to the notion

of soliciting a boon from a princess whom I had reason to think not very favourably disposed towards me was such, to say the least of it, as made me some time hesitate on the subject of taking his advice; and had I been the only one to suffer, it would, I think, have led me to submit for ever to present circumstances, rather than petition for a recal to Troitskoe. But others were deeply concerned; and such a place of residence for them!—a peasant's cabin, in upwards of sixty degrees of northern latitude, situated amidst morasses and impervious forests, which, during the sluggish and short-lived summers, cut off all convenient egress from the environs of the village, and with it almost the power of taking exercise. My daughter, Miss Bates, my servants—all were sufferers—sufferers, perhaps, in a much greater degree than myself, who had for my individual support, as the object of unmerited persecution, a proud sense of innocence, which gave me courage and energy more than I could have conceived, and such as, on reflection, has often suggested a problem to my mind, which I know not how to solve without attributing some of these effects to the prevalence of that best and most desirable of principles, resignation.

What rendered our position more melancholy was, the circumstance which at the present season facilitated an intercourse with other parts of the country. The marshes being frozen, several versts could be saved on the way from Petersburg to

Siberia, by passing through this village; and many a company of wretched exiles moved along on their route under my very windows. Once happening to observe a kibitka of a different form to those of the country stopping at the door of an adjacent cabin, with its horses unyoked, I sent a servant to inform himself to whom it belonged. The stranger asked from whom the inquiry came, and hearing my name, begged permission to see me for a moment, as one distantly connected with my family by marriage.

Though it was neither convenient to me under present circumstances, nor agreeable, to receive visitors, yet from the idea that he might be in want of some aid which I could supply, I begged him to come; and to begin a conversation, I asked how he happened to be my relative. As the stranger was explaining himself, I observed a faltering in his speech, and a convulsive tremour throughout his whole person and features. "You are surely ill," I said, "and you appear to be in pain."

"Not more so," he articulated with difficulty, "than I shall probably be for the remainder of my life."

He then told his story—that he had found himself implicated in a charge made against some brother subalterns in the guards, of holding language offensive to the emperor—that his companions had been banished into Siberia, and that he had been delivered over to the torture; and after having

thus suffered the dislocation of all his limbs, was sent, an outcast from the service, to reside at Wologda, on an estate of his uncle, who was made answerable for his future behaviour.

To prolong this interview without the power of rendering the least service was too painful; I could only compassionate his case. But the vision of this young man, with his dislocated limbs, and nerves as it were rent asunder, for a long time haunted my imagination.

Soon after this occurrence, I had a visit from Madame Worontzoff and her daughter. She was the widow of a cousin of mine, a little distant, it is true, but one whom I much esteemed. The youngest son of this lady, respectable in every sense of the word, had been at a very early age entrusted to my care, and educated until he was sixteen under my superintendence, when he had entered the army with the rank of major. His good principles and uniformly good conduct, together with the most tender respect for his mother, which made a prominent feature of his character, formed the pride and consolation of her life; and the care I had taken of his education had established, in her conception, a debt of gratitude which, by this and every other attention in her power, she was anxious to acknowledge. She lodged in the cabin next to mine, and stayed with me a week. Some books which we had the foresight to bring from Troitskoe, a few pencils which we employed in sketching the surrounding

scenery on our deal table, which every third day was washed and served afresh for the same purpose, as we could not afford paper; these means of occupation, the drollery of a little cossack, one of my family; and, as far as I was concerned, a perfect resignation to my fate, which moved my companions to a correspondent exertion of fortitude and patience, —made the time pass not heavily.

As I found, however, from the peasants, that in the month of April, at the melting of the snow and ice, the river near the village was expected regularly to overflow its banks and lay the surrounding country, to the extent of two or three versts, under water, and that no vessels or rafts were to be procured for transportation, except the small boats of the fishermen, and as we had no carriages on wheels, and no means of procuring them, I thought it expedient, before our egress was thus for a season effectually cut off, to try the effect of a letter to the empress.

I therefore at length wrote to solicit her interest with the emperor in procuring permission for my return to Troitskoe, where I might be within reach of medical aid, and lodged in my own house, which I assured her majesty I had no intention of ever quitting without orders, and we should be removed from the unnecessary restraint and suffering experienced by us in a peasant's cabin.

I addressed in the same cover an unsealed letter to the emperor; and truth obliges me to confess that it was expressed rather in a disdainful than in

a supplicating tone. I began by describing my health as so precarious, and myself so indifferent as to where I might happen to die, that perhaps it might be as little worth my while to write as his majesty's to read my letter; but that neither religion nor humanity would permit me to see unconcerned, and without an effort for their relief, the sufferings and privations to which those were exposed who were voluntarily sharing a banishment inflicted on one quite unconscious of her crime.

My conduct during the lifetime of the empress his mother had never been marked, I added, by a single evil intention against his person or power; and all, in fine, I had to ask was, his permission to live in retirement on my estate at Troitskoe; a boon, of which if I individually were deemed unworthy, I asked for the benefit of my suffering companions and servants.

These letters were dispatched by the post, and it is unnecessary to observe, that we awaited their result not without impatience.

I was afterwards informed by some one at that time present in Petersburg, and intimately acquainted with what passed in the imperial apartments, that my epistle to his majesty was within an ace of producing the most terrible effects for us. But thanks to Providence, the versatility to which the emperor was subject, and I know not what happy accident of delay in the journey of the courier

sent to give the *coup de grâce* to our rising hopes, and to finish the struggles of a woman who existed only to combat a rigorous fate, reversed the sentence, and instead of evil, brought us consolation and relief.

When the empress had received my letter, and presented to the emperor the one addressed to him, he fell into the most inconceivable fury, and driving her from his presence, swore that he never would be dethroned as his father had been, nor would he receive a letter from me. In the height of his rage he sent off a courier, with orders that I should be deprived of pens, ink, and paper, and kept so strictly watched as to be debarred from all communication and correspondence whatever, except with those immediately about me.

The empress, after this ill success, had recourse to Mlle. Nelidoff, the favourite, who placing my letter in the hands of the youngest Grand Duke Michael, conducted him in company with her majesty into the presence of Paul. The emperor took the letter with a softening countenance, and having read it, embraced his little son, and said, "You know, ladies, how to plead irresistibly."

The ladies followed up their success with a thousand caresses; and the emperor immediately wrote me a letter in Russ, of which the following is a literal translation:—

"Princess Catharine Romanovna,—As you are

desirous of returning to your estate in the government of Kalouga, you are at liberty to do so.—I remain, your well-wisher and very affectionate,

"PAUL."

M. Archaroff, the military governor of Petersburg, was immediately summoned, and directed, without a moment's delay, to dispatch another courier with orders to overtake the former one, charged with a very different message, and already on his way to Kalouga. Either from ill-will or inconsiderateness, this M. Archaroff, who was elder brother to the governor of Moscow, fixed on a messenger for this purpose who had only just returned from Siberia, whither he had been conducting an unfortunate officer of the guards into exile.

It was little to be expected that a courier, after performing such a journey, thither and back not less than four thousand versts, and sent off again without taking any repose, should be able to come up with a fresh one some hours before him on the way. But fate seemed weary of persecuting me; the last sent messenger used such diligence that he overtook the first and sent him back.

At the moment of his arrival I was at the window of my cabin, and seeing a kibitka near the steps surrounded by my servants, I went out, and met a courier from the emperor. Miss Bates in vain implored him to declare what news he bore. He could not tell; he knew nothing, but that he had an ukase

from his majesty for Princess Daschkaw. I was pointed out to him, and he delivered the above-mentioned letter.

Before I could break the seal the good Miss Bates threw herself at my feet, and said, "Let us take courage, dear princess—in Siberia there is also a God."

She grew pale, and trembled from head to foot, whilst I raised her up, and entreated her to be composed, that I might read the letter. When I had cast my eyes over it, and told her that we had permission to return to Troitskoe, she again sank to the earth, so affected and overcome that, falling into a state bordering on delirium, I had her conveyed to bed.

I then ordered my people to give some wine and other refreshments to the courier, but he refused either to eat or drink, asking only a corner where he might lie down and sleep, which he had not done for many days.

The happy tidings which had rendered all my servants frantic with joy, were announced to my daughter. The next morning I asked the courier how much he received a year, and after presenting him with money to nearly double the amount, I dismissed him, not the least joyous of a party of which, had I not been agitated and alarmed on account of Miss Bates, I might proclaim myself the only individual at all calm and composed. A fever

had come on after her fainting fit; and during its continuance, as I was the only person about her whom she recognised, I seldom left her bedside except to write some letters, and make arrangements for sending forward a part of my family, in order that I might move with more ease and lightness the moment that Miss Bates could travel without danger.

By return of the emperor's courier I enclosed an unsealed letter to M. Archaroff, requesting him to transmit it to M. Lepechine, perpetual secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, a particular friend of mine, to whom I had written an account of what had happened, and also my address at Troitskoe; but M. Archaroff had the meanness to suppress this letter.

I took advantage of a peasant travelling to Petersburg to send some letters to my friends in England, under cover to Mr. Glynn, an English merchant, resident in that city.

During the eight days that the fever continued on Miss Bates, I made our preparations for moving, and guarded as much as possible against difficulties and delays on the way. At the end of that period, Miss Bates, though weak, was sufficiently recovered to set out; and on the tenth day after the welcome arrival of the courier, towards the end of March, whilst winter was still in its full rigour, having sent forward my own horses, which I had kept at Korotowa, one hundred and twenty versts in advance, we commenced our journey homewards from exile.

I cannot quit this part of my history without speaking of the daily proofs I received from these poor peasants of their extraordinary and delicate zeal to do me service. On returning from the market of the neighbouring town twice a week, they brought everything they could procure which was good, and even rare and delicate, for my table; and nothing would induce them to take any recompence. I learned but a few days before my departure that the female peasants, who came every day with their little offerings of eggs and cakes of the country, came by turns, which they arranged amongst each other, in order that each might have an opportunity of seeing me, and seeing that I continued to exist and was well.

I frequently asked how it happened that they should feel any personal attachment to one who had long ceased to be their mistress; and the answer was invariably to the same effect: "From the time that we belonged to you we have been happy, and are become rich; you have brought up the prince, our good master, in your own principles; and though he has a little raised our impost, it is still much less than what our neighbours pay to their lords."

CHAPTER III.

Return to Troitskoe—Gratifying welcome home of the princess—Renewed communications with friends—The princess's houses turned into barracks—Occupations of the princess at Troitskoe—Calumnies against the Empress Catherine—Partiality of the Emperor Paul to Prince Daschkaw—M. Nicholay—Prince Kourakin communicates the pardon of the emperor to the princess—Singular scene on parade—Extraordinary favour shewn by the emperor to Prince Daschkaw—A sudden change—Dismissal of the prince.

In consequence of my good peasants having sent on relays of horses, we got over more ground in one day on our return than in two and a half on coming. The ninth day of our journey was truly a day of rejoicing. We were then reaching the neighbourhood of Troitskoe, where each of my servants had a wife, a mother, children, or friends, to bless the moment of his arrival. Towards evening I heard a shout of triumph. We were within view of the river Pratwa, which flows through my grounds. It was my coachman who first hailed the sight, and the news merited and drew forth the little remaining money from my purse.

What a scene of felicitations and happiness! There was not a creature who any longer remembered past suffering! All were now for pressing on,—but, alas! our poor horses were yet too far from their stables to partake of this general sentiment. They had done their work for the day; and the increased difficulty of proceeding on sledges, as the snow was disappearing, made us yield with reluctance to the necessity of passing one more night on the way.

On the tenth day, however, we reached Troitskoe; and on alighting at the church, I found it, although a very large one, entirely filled with the inhabitants of sixteen villages and hamlets which belonged to me, and the servants whom I had left behind. After the *Te Deum*, all came pressing about me to kiss my hand, and testify their delight at my return; but I had not sufficient strength to support myself any longer on my feet, and I entreated them to postpone their gratifying welcome until I was better able to receive it.

I was deeply affected at this demonstration of their attachment, and the unfeigned joy which beamed on every countenance; but after my late exhaustion of strength and spirits, exertion of any kind was beyond my power, and repose in bed was then indispensable.

The day afterwards I sent a servant to my brother, who was at Moscow, announcing my return; I wrote, also, to my nieces Princesses Dolgorouky

and Mavrocordato, letters of inquiry respecting their own welfare and that of other friends and connexions, and every particular they could communicate relative to my son.

To my great relief of mind, I had reason to bless Divine Providence that those whom I most loved had in their own persons escaped the effects of the extensive tyranny which prevailed.

My house at Moscow I found had been converted into a barrack for the accommodation of an officer and eighty-seven soldiers. Before military possession was thus taken of it, my steward had the good sense to bar up and seal every door leading to the body of the house, saying, that I had been compelled to quit it in a hurry, and had left him to take charge, and give an account, of all my effects; a most wise and useful precaution, which saved me from the expense of having one of those miserable generals quartered upon me, the military of Gatchina,* (as they were expressively called,) who would inevitably have destroyed my furniture, and left my house a wilderness.

My villa near the town was devoted to a like purpose. It was occupied by ninety soldiers and six inferior officers; so that besides other expenses forced on me by these arbitrary proceedings, three

* A country house of the emperor's, where he frequently received his military officers.

thousand trunks of trees, which had been floated down the river on rafts from one of my estates, and were lying at Moscow, were not sufficient for the quantity of fuel I was compelled to furnish.

The annoyance and inconvenience to which I had thus been subjected determined me, though not without a feeling of regret, to part with this possession. It had been a resource to me even in winter, from the beauty of its garden, which thirty years' care had brought to perfection. It was furnished with several walks and alleys, kept in the most perfect neatness, and as these, during the snow, were regularly swept and sanded, I had always within my own grounds an agreeable promenade. This advantage, however, was more than counterbalanced by the expense it cost me, added to the embarrassment and disagreeableness of its being occasionally subject to the occupation of such guests as I have just noticed. Besides, it appeared uncertain whether I should ever again be permitted to inhabit Moscow, where, in truth, I had no great disposition to fix myself; for since my return to Troitskoe, all my relatives, and such friends as deserved the name, came to see me there; and because I was well aware that in every great town, especially in Moscow, a strict system of espionage was established, so much the more dangerous as informations were ever the surest means of gaining the favour of suspicious and restless tyrants.

In the summer I tranquilly recommenced both my horticultural and agricultural labours, and as I had not a servant in either of these departments who understood his business, my time was fully occupied. The bodily fatigue I underwent in the day was, however, well compensated by the prompt and sound sleep which followed it, and which became the more necessary as I never failed to awake at the same hour in the morning at which I was roused by those who bore the ill tidings of my banishment to Korotowa. As I rarely fell asleep afterwards, I felt it necessary to repose for about an hour after dinner. On rainy days, when I could not quit the house, I either employed myself in making drawings of plans of buildings and plantations, such as I wished to execute, or had recourse to my library.

I was desirous of having new foreign publications of merit; and for this purpose I gave an order, and assigned a yearly sum of money; but the importation of books in general was almost wholly prohibited, although we were suffered to be inundated with pamphlets which calumniated Catherine the Second; and works of this nature my friends did not send me. I procured, however, some of them which were most current at Moscow, and if life is spared me, before I abandon the pen, I will add to this memoir, which, if it should not merit to pass down to posterity, may perhaps interest my friends and the partiality of their descendants, some notes, such as I hope will prove the utter falsehood of certain as-

sertions which hatred and envy could alone have dictated.*

In the year 1798, Prince Daschkaw was at Petersburg. The emperor at that time could scarcely live without him; and to such an excess was this capricious liking carried, that he was sure to be in bad humour whenever my son failed to dine at court. My son used then to pass whole hours tête-à-tête with the emperor in his cabinet, and was often admitted along with him into the apartments of the empress, at times when no one else was present but Mlle. Nelidoff, and when even their imperial highnesses were excluded.

Ever since my son's arrival at Petersburg, he had solicited the Grand Duke Alexander to obtain permission for me to reside at Moscow, and to visit my other estates. I had, however, earnestly enjoined him, as soon as I was informed of his going to Petersburg, not to think of me, but to use every precaution for his own safety. In all my letters I reiterated this injunction, and in the most positive terms assuring him that I was so attached to my residence at Troitskoe that I preferred it to every other part of Russia, and that my manner of treating my subjects was such as to render any personal superintendence, either in the administration of my other estates, or in the collection of the moderate

* This intention on the part of the princess was never fulfilled.—Ed.

revenue which I derived from them, unnecessary. I begged him, consequently, to be fully persuaded that change of place was what I neither desired nor needed.

My son, nevertheless, continued to address himself on this subject to his imperial highness; but more than a month passed before the promises made in return to his solicitations produced any effect. He spoke also of his wishes to M. Nicholay, who was Director of the Academy of Sciences, and in high credit with the empress, to whom he was first secretary.

It happened one day that this gentleman was in the empress's apartment, when her majesty, conversing with Mlle. Nelidoff on the consideration which Prince Daschkaw enjoyed at court, and his influence over the mind of the sovereign, expressed her astonishment that he did not employ it in obtaining the liberty of his mother. M. de Nicholay seized the occasion of explaining how my son had acted in soliciting the grand duke's protection in order to obtain this favour, and that he was grieved and unhappy that the promises he had received had not yet produced the desired result. He went still further, and suggested how gracious and generous it would be if her majesty and the other lady whom he addressed would in such a cause unite their influence with those of his imperial highness.

M. de Nicholay communicated this conversation to Prince Daschkaw. A few days afterwards,

Prince Alexis Kourakin visited my son by order of the emperor, to make known his majesty's intention of conferring on him the gift of five thousand peasants. To this my son replied, that he begged him to assure his majesty how deeply touched he was at the goodness he had thus testified towards him, for which he should ever feel a sentiment of the liveliest gratitude; but that, in truth, he had nothing to wish for, except the liberty of his mother.

The next morning Prince Kourakin came up to my son, near the grand guard assembled for the parade, to announce to him by the emperor's command the liberty of his mother, which he told him he was charged also to signify to me.

The letter of Prince Kourakin was in these terms :—

" Madam and very dear Aunt,

" I esteem myself very happy in announcing to you that the emperor has commanded me to inform you, that you are at liberty to visit your estates, change the place of your abode according to your wishes, and even to visit the capital when the court is absent from it; but if the court is there, you may occupy any country place nearest to it."

When the emperor soon afterwards appeared on the parade, my son would have thrown himself at his knees. The emperor, preventing him, embraced him, and my son, in a transport of gratitude, for-

getting that his majesty was short of stature, raised him from the ground in order more effectually to return his embrace. He wept, and the emperor wept also. This was the first and the last scene of sensibility of which the guards were made witnesses.

The kindness of Paul the First towards my son continued even until his departure from Petersburg. He consulted him on all his military plans, and the war he was about to undertake. He made him write in his cabinet, where he worked tête-à-tête with the emperor, all the plans of operations, and the disposition of the troops with regard to neighbouring states; having at that time secretly resolved to confer upon my son the command of the *corps d'armée* which was at Kiow. He even gave him several blank signatures, to be filled up at his own discretion, as circumstances might require. Instructions were also sent to the ministers at Vienna and Constantinople, Count Razoumoffsky and M. de Tamara, to put themselves in correspondence with Prince Daschkaw, as well as an order to the commander of the fleet in the Black Sea to co-operate with him in all his requisitions.

My son was sent direct from Petersburg to Kiow, where he was charged to make all the ulterior arrangements, and to communicate them to the emperor.

After these marks of distinguished favour and unbounded confidence, who could have anticipated that

before the year ended Prince Daschkaw would receive his dismissal! This, however, happened; and from a cause which might have been supposed little likely to have led to such an effect—his having represented to Prince Lapouchin, procureur-general of the senate, that a certain *Altesti*, confined at that time in the fortress of Kiow, was innocent of the crime laid to his charge.

This person had been accused of having established some soldiers as cultivators of the lands on an estate with which the late empress had presented him. The accusation was false; not a single soldier had ever been sent thither. But Altesti had been protected by Prince Zuboff in the preceding reign, and treated by him, whilst his secretary, with boundless confidence, injudicious perhaps, and reprehensible; and this, in fact, was his real offence. It is possible that Prince Lapouchin, in representing to the emperor my son's opinion on this subject, might have chosen for the purpose an unlucky moment—a moment when the sovereign was in ill humour. It might be that he had some particular reason of his own in doing it, for he was a false, underhand, and vindictive person. Be that as it may, the emperor wrote to Prince Daschkaw as follows:—

"As you meddle with things which do not concern you, you are hereby dismissed from your command. "PAUL."

My son, not wishing to trust to the courier (the

bearer of this singular letter) the emperor's blank signatures and other papers of consequence in his possession, wrote to his majesty to beg he would send some confidential person through whom he might return them. As Paul, however, seemed in no hurry to despatch any one for this purpose, Prince Daschkaw availed himself of the next courier going to Petersburg, and returned every paper to his majesty, as well as all his letters; and having quickly settled his private affairs at Kiow, set off thence for his estate in the government of Tamboff.

CHAPTER IV.

The princess goes into White Russia—Visits her brother—A presentiment—Death of the emperor—His character—Contrast to that of Catherine the Second—The princess and her brother invited to court—The princess goes to Petersburg—Returns to Moscow—Description of the coronation of Alexander—The Empress Elizabeth—Return of the princess to Troitskoe—Arrival of Miss Wilmot—Conclusion.

The summer following, I went to visit my estate in White Russia, where I remained some weeks, having found that innumerable depredations had been committed there by my steward, a Pole by birth, under a false persuasion that Siberia would be my destination.

I made several arrangements favourable to my peasants, and placed at the head of the administration of this estate one of my Russian subjects. On my return thence, I went to pass six weeks with my brother. Here I occupied myself with the improvements of his grounds, planting trees and shrubs, removing others which had been injudiciously placed, and doing much to render his country place agreeable.

As we were many hours together every day, our

conversation frequently recurred to a subject which profoundly affected us both—the misfortunes of our country, and those which menaced every individual; for he who in his own person was not the victim of the despotic tyranny of Paul, had to bewail the fate of a friend, a relative, or a neighbour.

An idea, I know not how, had taken full possession of my mind, that the year 1801 would be the termination of this reign of terror. I could give no satisfactory explanation to my brother, to whom I often mentioned this persuasion, how it had originated; but it remained a settled conviction, which I could not displace from my imagination.

In the beginning of that year, my brother reminded me of my prophecy—"Your year of promise," said he, "is arrived."

"Yes," I replied, "it is commenced; and see if my prognostic be not accomplished before it ends."

In truth, on the 12th of March O.S. of that year, Providence permitted that the days of Paul the First should be brought to a close, and thus terminated the public and private calamities of our country, which, through taxation in its most oppressive form, and through every species of persecution and tyranny, had gone on progressively extending themselves throughout the empire.

Many a time have I thanked Heaven that, being one of his proscribed, I was saved from the miserable duty of appearing at the court of such a sove-

reign! For what could I have possibly done there —I, to whom nature had absolutely refused the faculty of feigning—a talent so necessary near the persons of sovereigns, and still more so towards those who surround them; I, on whose countenance every feeling was sure to be betrayed, whether it were that of disgust, of contempt, or of indignation? How much uneasiness, indeed, how much pain, was I consequently spared; for of this unhappy person it may be truly said, that whatever there might have been of good in his character was overruled by a fierce and blustering sort of insanity, manifested in his quality as emperor, in a most unlimited conception and uncontrolled exercise of his power, and in his military capacity, as rendering him the abject slave of Prussian corporalism.

At intervals, Paul shewed himself a suspicious poltroon, and was always occupied with the supposed existence of plots against his life. His actions were the bursts of the moment, which unhappily were too generally those of outrage and cruelty. No one approached him without a sensation of terror; still, however, not such as to exclude a strong mixture of contempt.

What a contrast between the existence of the courtiers around him—slaves to this terrific caprice—and of those who had the happiness to be near the person of the great Catherine! Though there was something truly dignified in her easiness of access, it was not with a servile or fearful respect

that one appeared in her presence. The deepest veneration, a respect of the whole soul, animated by love and gratitude—these were the sort of sentiments which her approach inspired. Amiable, full of playfulness and gaiety, in private society she wished her rank to be forgotten; but if it were possible for any one to lose sight of it for a moment, the conviction that every one felt of her natural superiority, rendered the sentiment of respect I have mentioned inseparable from the idea connected with her person and presence.

My brother, on his return to Moscow, quoted to several people my singular prophecy, and thus occasioned the annoyance of a thousand inquiries, to which I could not give a single satisfactory answer; for, as I have observed, it would have been impossible to explain how such an idea became fixed on my imagination.

It was not long before my brother received letters from the new emperor, pressing him to go to Petersburg, and to take a part in the affairs of government. I was also complimented by a message from his majesty through my nephew, Tatischeff,* who was sent to me at Troitskoe, inviting me to repair to court. It was not, however, for a valetudinarian, at my age and with my ideas on the sub-

* He was a member of the department of Foreign Affairs, and Chamberlain, and had the direction also of what concerned the Asiatic courts.

ject of a court, to be too anxious again to figure at one.

I would not keep my nephew with me more than three days, in order that he might pass a few more with his mother and relatives at Moscow; and having urged him to return as soon as possible to his post, lest some other person should obtain it—a contingency not impossible at the commencement of a new reign—I charged him with a letter for the emperor, in which, having thanked his majesty for his gracious remembrance, I expressed my regrets that an impaired state of health would prevent my immediately setting off for the imperial residence; but that the moment I might be able to undertake the journey, I should hasten to gratify the lively desire I felt of presenting to him my homage.

With this intention, at the end of April I left Troitskoe, in order to see my brother, Count Alexander, at Moscow, before he quitted it for Petersburg. We there agreed that he should set off a week before me, not only to afford a little more time to collect my strength for the journey, but to save us from the embarrassment and delay attending post-horses, which, as each required no small number, could not fail to have occurred had we travelled in company.

It was in the month of May that, by short stages, I arrived at Petersburg. If I had much pleasure in again seeing the emperor, whom during twelve years

I had been accustomed to love, I experienced still greater in perceiving that beauty was the least charm which distinguished his consort. Her good sense, her information, her modesty, and those nameless graces which originate from an amiable disposition, united to much tact and a prudence beyond her years, rendered her highly interesting and attractive to me. She already spoke correctly the Russian language, and without the least foreign accent. But I saw with pain that Alexander was surrounded by none but very young people, too ready to ridicule or undervalue their elders, whom a certain timidity of the emperor, occasioned perhaps by his deafness, already led him to avoid.

The four years of the reign of Paul, who would have made nothing of his sons but corporals, had been lost for the purposes of application and study; the guard parades and the dress of the soldiers were the principal objects on which he fixed their attention. I foresaw that the emperor's goodness of heart, and those principles of justice and humanity which under other care had been strictly inculcated, would not save him from giving his confidence to those who immediately surrounded his person, nor the ministers and people in office from certain embarrassments in their public measures, which, as a consequence, might be expected to ensue.

I left Petersburg at the end of July, taking rather a circuitous journey towards my estate in White

Russia, in order to make some very necessary preparations for the coronation, in the articles of dress and equipage, which for the last seven years, I must confess, had been absolutely neglected.

I borrowed from the bank forty-four thousand roubles, of which I employed nineteen thousand five hundred to pay a letter of exchange of my son, eleven thousand to liquidate a debt of my nephew Demetrius Tatischeff, and the rest I destined to the purposes of putting my house a little in order, and of making some suitable appearance at the coronation, if not with magnificence, at least with a certain decency which my rank required.

Before my departure, I obtained a promise from the emperor that at the approaching promotions my niece Mlle. Kotchetoff should be named maid of honour, and Prince Ourousoff, who had just married my niece Mlle. Tatischeff, gentleman of the chamber.

I arrived at Moscow a fortnight before the court. The entry of their majesties into the city was solemn and magnificent. More than fifty carriages of the court, and as many of those of the great nobles, followed in procession.

After the carriages of their majesties and those of the imperial family came that in which were the Princess Amelia, sister of the empress, and myself as first lady of the imperial court. The ladies and maids of honour followed, then the grand dignitaries, &c.

Their majesties moved directly on to the cathedral in the Kremlin, where the procession alighted to hear the *Te Deum*. As I have no partiality for ceremonies, or etiquette, or galas, I shall not describe them; besides, as all coronations are much alike, it will be sufficient to observe, that the young emperor and his charming consort gained the hearts of all the inhabitants of Moscow.

During the sojourn of the court in this ancient residence of our sovereigns, I led a most fatiguing life. Though the palace of Slabada, the residence of the court, was almost nine versts from my house, I seldom passed a day without going thither. I was thus assiduous in my visits because I had the power of rendering a little service to the Empress Elizabeth, in making known to her the characters of some persons, and in informing her on certain points which, trifling as they might appear, were not unworthy of her notice, in order to her producing the effect on her subjects which she was so well qualified, and I felt so anxious for her, to make.

These visits were not only well taken, but, as I heard from my brother, occasioned such a return of kind expressions from her majesty towards me, as convinced me that they were not deemed useless. Nothing short of a lively attachment to her person connected with this idea could, in fact, have led me to make such sacrifices of my ease to the ennui, the ceremony, the etiquette, and the atmosphere of a court, suffocating almost as it was to such a rustic

as myself. No motives of personal interest could have possibly influenced me in such a manner and to such a degree.

After the departure of the court for Petersburg, too happy to resume my ordinary mode of life, I set off for Troitskoe, which it was my custom to do in the beginning of March.

The year following, I went to my estate in White Russia, to finish and to have consecrated a church which I had been building in the middle of the principal square of Krougla; and as my brother Simon was expected this summer at Petersburg from England, where he had been minister during the reign of the empress, and where he had resided as a private person during the reign of Paul, I repaired thither in the month of July.

Of those who surrounded the young sovereign, various as their opinions might be on other subjects, all were united in a system of disparaging the reign and character of Catherine the Second. It would be difficult to express the indignation I felt on some occasions when, at the expense of this sovereign, Peter the First was exalted to the skies. I could not withhold my own sentiments on these subjects, which I delivered with frankness, and sometimes, perhaps, with too much warmth.

One day, I well remember, when almost all the ministers of the new and somewhat incongruous administration, as well as several of the personal friends and favourites of the emperor, were dining

at my brother's, (Count Alexander,) the conversation turned on the reign of Catherine the Second, and so unmercifully were her measures criticised,—confounding the abuses of Prince Potemkin with the acts of the empress, and making no distinction between the ignorance or want of fidelity in the minister and the profoundness and purity of her own views, directed as they always were to the prosperity of the empire,—that my feelings, deeply and painfully wrought upon, led me to enter upon her defence with a warmth and sincerity which caused no small sensation throughout the company. Some of my relations had strongly pronounced themselves in favour of those opinions which I had as strenuously opposed; and to such a degree, indeed, was I excited and affected by this attack on the empress, and by my efforts to repel it, that on returning home that evening I became seriously unwell, and continued so for several days. During this time my door was absolutely besieged by visitors of both sexes making inquiries after my health; and I mention this mark of attention simply because I am sure it proceeded from the jealousy entertained in common with myself, for the credit and honour of this great sovereign and benefactress of Russia. The discourse at table which I have alluded to had, in fact, become the conversation of the whole town; hence the interest taken in my illness on this occasion, and the value which I have attached to it.

Petersburg was, however, much changed. There was little now to be seen amongst the active and aspiring, but people who might be fairly classed among the two descriptions of jacobins and corporals; I say corporals, because, from the private soldier to the general, each individual was occupied chiefly, if not solely, with the handling of arms; and as the movements and measures of the drill were continually changing, there was a constant necessity in these matters of forgetting and learning anew.

When the autumn was pretty far advanced, I returned to Moscow, and thence to Troitskoe,—from which latter place, being my own architect and gardener from taste, and farmer from necessity, as the soil required much care and labour, I could not long absent myself.

Some following years of my life I may be allowed to pass over in silence, as they offer nothing of general interest; and if the sorrows which then oppressed my heart are of a nature which I would willingly conceal from myself, I shall be readily excused in not presenting them to my readers.

The emperor, I cannot omit to state, had the kindness to take upon himself the debt which I had incurred at the bank.

At the end of August, 1803, I derived a consolation from another source, far greater and far more precious, in the arrival of Miss M. Wilmot, cousin of my tender and best of friends Mrs. Hamilton, daughter of the Archbishop of Tuam. Miss Wilmot

came to visit me at Troitskoe, to spread around me by her conversation, by our readings together, by her sweetness and amiability, those calm pleasures which a long want of something to interest my affections, and call forth the powers of my mind, had now rendered doubly dear to me. Her parents had so formed her mind and character, that she is, it may be truly said, an object of admiration to all who know and are capable of appreciating her.

With what a lively sentiment of gratitude does my heart render her this tribute,—a heart deeply touched by the confidence which her parents had reposed in me, as well as by her own courage in coming to a person who, instead of being capable of imparting pleasure, was in need herself of every soothing attention, and who, before her arrival, was accustomed to greet the end of every day as a diminution of the task which fate had assigned to a sorrowful existence. Never, never can I acknowledge how much I am indebted to her. My solitude to me is now become a paradise,—yes, it might be so, if

* * * *

and that does not depend on her.

That which my relatives and other friends could never obtain from me I have consented to do for her sake alone. I have written this memoir because she has earnestly desired it. She, therefore, is its sole proprietor, with one only condition, that it is not given to the world till after my death.

With regard to what I have written, I may add

an assurance that I have strictly adhered to the simple truth. In omitting some things which might have been injurious to others I have failed, perhaps, to do justice to myself; but by these omissions the reader will be no loser. Should I live a few years longer, it is my intention to write some anecdotes of Catherine the Second, justly called the Great; to recapitulate her beneficent actions, and to draw a parallel between her and Peter the First, whom some have ventured to compare with this illustrious empress—one whose reign has rendered Russia a preponderating power, respected and feared by all the states of Europe.

In conclusion, I can further say that I have done all the good which has been in my power; that I have done evil to no one; that the only vengeance I have taken for the injustice, the intrigues, and the calumnies at various times directed against me, has been that of oblivion or contempt; that I have fulfilled my duties as far as I have been able to perceive and comprehend them; that with an honest heart and pure intentions I have supported some poignant sorrows, which, with my too great sensibility, were it not for the consolatory testimony of a good conscience, I must have inevitably sunk under; and, finally, that I see my dissolution approaching without fear and without inquietude.

Troitskoe, Oct. 27, 1805.

POSTSCRIPT.

I HAVE to lament that little remains to be added on my part to the foregoing memoir relative to the last days of my beloved friend. After my return to England, at the close of the year 1808, I had the comfort of receiving several letters from herself, and some from her niece, Mlle. Istlainoff; but there was nothing in these to excite apprehensions that the state of her health was materially altered. The first intimation I had to the contrary was the affecting intelligence of her death, which was very feelingly communicated to me in a letter from her niece, the Countess, now Dowager Countess, of Pembroke. The only particulars, I was informed, which Count Worontzow, her father, had received of this event were, that on the princess's arrival at Moscow, about the middle of December, 1809, she was more weak and less well than usual; and that on Christmas-day she was seized with a fever, which terminated her life on the 4th of January, O.S., of the following year.

In two or three posts after I had heard from Lady Pembroke, I received a packet from Moscow, containing four letters from the princess, and one from the banker to whom those letters had been consigned, formally announcing the event of her death. I wrote immediately and repeatedly to Mlle. Istlainoff, and to another person, to try to obtain further particulars and details of her last illness, but their own lamentations, and their sympathy in my feelings, formed the sole burthen of their replies. Whether it was that prudence restrained them, or a want of the habit of writing, or that little was to be told beyond the facts which I have mentioned,—I never had the satisfaction of learning those circumstances which I continued long anxious to know, and lost no opportunity of inquiring after.

The four letters to which I have alluded—the last I received from the princess, and one of which was perhaps the last she ever wrote—gave me no cause, in any part of them where she spoke of herself, to anticipate her approaching end. They were melancholy, it is true, as were all I received from her since I had quitted Russia; they abounded in expressions of sorrow at our separation, and fond partiality,—which, met as it was by a correspondent feeling on my part, would have hardly allowed me to have quitted her, but for the duty, and (from some circumstances which will partly appear in my narrative) I may almost say the necessity, of returning to my parents; the force and propriety

of which reasons the princess herself fully acknowledged.

Letters, written under the dictation of such a spirit of affectionate attachment, it will be easily conceived, are too sacred to my feelings to be willingly made public. This sentiment, however, I have endeavoured to suppress in laying one of them before the reader, which, strongly as it marks the character of the writer's amiable and sensitive heart, and thus from her own pen adds a concluding touch to the moral portrait which it is the object of the foregoing pages to convey, is not on this account now brought forward; it is rather for the purpose of throwing an incidental light on a proceeding of the authorities at Petersburg, for the detention of my papers previously to my quitting Russia, as referred to hereafter in my personal narrative, and of exculpating the highest personage in the state from any hostile feeling towards the princess on this occasion.

The letter is as follows: it is translated from the French, in which she usually wrote, but I have preserved in her own words the little passages of English with which her letters were frequently interspersed.

25th Oct. (O.S.)

Yesterday, my large packet for you was sent to the care of Mr. Hawes, which I hope you will receive, as well as a little note put under the cover of Lady Pembroke. This which I am now writing

will not be dispatched until a few days before my departure, or perhaps not until my arrival at Moscow.

But what can I say, my beloved child, which will not give you pain! I am sad, very sad,—tears will flow, and time does not accustom me to your absence. I have sought occupation in building some bridges, and in planting several hundred trees and shrubs in my garden—an improvement which pleases me, and which all about me admire; but that turns my attention only for an instant from other thoughts, and consequently affords no permanent relief to my overwhelming regret at having lost you.

October 28th.

The last two days I have not been well, and therefore have not continued this melancholy journal. I wrote to Count Michael on the receipt of your last letter but one, all that you have said on the subject of his father, and what the latter said on receiving the portrait of his son. But here I am interrupted, and must read, or have read to me, a most tedious sheet of some law chicanery. Adieu, my angel; may Heaven protect you!

October 29th.

How all is changed at Troitskoe! The theatre is closed. I have not had a single representation. The piano-forte continues silent—the femmes-de-chambre have ceased to sing. Everything paints

your absence, and my sorrow. But why should I speak thus? You are surrounded by relatives, who delight in you, and whom you love. Your days are passing in the only true enjoyment. Let it, then, be my lot to suffer; and whilst I know that you are happy, I will not complain. Adieu, dearest of friends.

October 30th.

I have lately heard from Hawes, that he had at my desire written to the American Consul at Petersburg, begging him to send off hither some letters for me, which, by a communication from that gentleman, I understood had already reached his hands; (*by the bye, you must know that I could not make of the letter of the above-named consul nor head nor tail;*) and that, in reply, he had been informed that he was daily expecting several packets which would contain letters for me. Thus am I again buoyed up with hope; perhaps to-morrow or Wednesday's post may bring some news from my beloved child. Till to-morrow, then, I quit my pen.

October 31st.

The post has arrived, but not, alas! the only letter that I was anxious to receive.

How depressing is the melancholy which I endure; tears blot my paper; but let me briefly say, I have had a charming letter from the Grand-

Duchess Catherine,* full of expressions the most unequivocal of her continued esteem and friendship. She is at Twer, of which her husband is governor. Adieu!

November 3rd.

At this moment your letter of the 27th of April is before me, and though of an earlier date than that I received through Lady Pembroke, it is a delight to me to read your writing, and to reflect how on that day you were thinking of and occupied with me. I cannot conceive who that personage can be who, long despised at court, sought to raise himself into favour at my expense; but in case you may not have received a former letter, partly on this subject, I will now repeat, that I wrote to the emperor to say that my enthusiastic love of my country, and my personal attachment to him from his infancy, ought to have placed me above suspicion; that the proceeding with regard to your papers† could be viewed only as directed against me; and that if it were the history of my life which they wished to seize, there was but one motive, that of modesty, which prevented me from printing it during my lifetime. To this I added many other truths, and some remarks, such as

* Duchess of Oldenburg.

† The particulars of this proceeding are related in my personal narrative, towards its conclusion.—Ed.

a bad choice of visiers, who, à leur tour, make choice of corrupted bashaws, &c. &c. In answer I received, that the scrutiny of your papers was what is doing with every one going out of the country; that there was not any personality; and as to what belonged to me, that he had nothing so much at heart as my tranquillity, and that this was intimated to Toutolmine, with order that he must be diligent to have all lawful measure done for my satisfaction and repose—mais basta. It is my lot, I am well aware, to attract the malice and malevolence of selfish knaves.

As to my journey to England, in case of peace, and the possibility, I must add, of an easy passage, I wish it with all my heart; but for this my strength also must not decay so rapidly as it does at present. *Thank you thousand time, my sweet angel, for the promise you give me, that in the contrary case you will come to me.* You desire me to mention Count Michael; so I will tell you; I had lately two letters from him, and one from his sister.

November 6th.

The winter, which seemed willing to establish itself, has disappeared these two days, though not for good, as our climate could not support its absence. But I cannot say when I shall be able to set off for Moscow; therefore I will to-morrow dispatch this letter, and Heaven grant it may find you in perfect health and tranquillity. Adieu, my beloved child! *God bless you.*

The latter part of the foregoing letter was written two months before the death of the princess.

To wear the mourning of a child for a parent during a year,—which her maternal, her unbounded kindness gave me, as I conceived, the privilege of doing,—was the only mark of outward respect to her memory at that time within my power to offer.

The chain of circumstances leading to the too-flattering preference which placed her memoir in my hands has been already noticed in the introduction, and will be spoken of more at large in the supplementary narrative which I have been induced to add.

I may here be allowed to repeat, that nothing but a sense of duty to my revered friend would have brought me thus before the public, or led me to speak of my own personal share in scenes so long passed away that, to borrow in part an idea of her own, I feel at this period as if scarcely inhabiting the same world where such things once gave me pain or pleasure.

Not so my feelings towards the memory of my friend. Time, which weakens many others, has only strengthened my anxiety to do her justice in fulfilling this duty; and if I live to find her honoured name coupled with the praise it merits, I shall feel a consolation which few other circumstances could impart.

M. B.

LETTERS AND NOTES

OF

THE EMPRESS CATHERINE

TO THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW,

WITH FOUR LETTERS TO MLLE. LEOFFSCHIN.

THE following Notes from the Empress Catherine the Second to Princess Daschkaw, numbered from 1 to 25, were for the most part written whilst she was Grand Duchess, a little before the revolution of 1762, and are those which accidentally escaped the flames; as, during their correspondence at this period, almost all their writings on either side were carefully destroyed. Those commencing with the date Czarskoselo, 19th August, 1782, passed during the time when Princess Daschkaw presided over the Imperial Academy of Arts and Sciences.

NOTES, ETC.

No. 1.

My dear Princess,—I embrace with eagerness an opportunity which offers itself by my valet-de-chambre, to assure you of my tender regard, as well as to inquire after your health, which interests me in proportion as I feel and value the affectionate attentions which you never cease to lavish on me. I rely on your influence with your father, my dear princess, in behalf of the bearer of this little note, who is anxious to obtain a mitigation of his brother-in-law's punishment (the justice of which he admits), to his being sent as a soldier wherever the senate may think proper. Your father, to whom I beg my compliments, will hear all the particulars of this affair from the mouth of the person interested in it; I will therefore add nothing further than an assurance of the most sincere esteem and cordial affection with which my heart responds to every feeling of yours, and that I remain,

Your most devoted friend,

Catherine.

Pray give my compliments to the prince, whose suffering from the intense heat I really pity.

No. 2.

Written with a pencil.

I was much concerned, my dear princess, to hear of the accident which happened to you at the ball last night; for, in truth, it was not necessary that you should hurt your foot in addition to other annoyances. I sent immediately to inquire after you, but found that you were gone. For my part, I am really unwell to-day, which I look upon as a judgment for pretending indisposition yesterday. This will of course prevent my appearance at the Opera; but in spite of everything I scribble this line, simply to ask how you do. Say everything kind for me to the prince, and be assured of the friendship and esteem of

Your devoted friend,

CATHERINE.

No. 3.

I not only owe you a letter, dear princess, but also many acknowledgments, for the message I have received through M. Le Fort. I am sensible, so sensible, indeed, of all your kindness, that I have been the victim of ennui ever since you left me. Difficult, indeed, would be the search to find your equal here, when, throughout Russia, the person I am sure does not exist worthy to replace a friend like you. This letter is merely to bear witness of what M. Le Fort is commissioned to tell

you; namely, that I was neither deaf nor dumb, nor insensible; and I must have been all three in perfection, not to be penetrated by a character like yours. I hope soon, with my own lips, to assure you of the esteem and friendship with which I am,

Your devoted

CATHERINE.

A thousand kind things to the prince.

No. 4.

What verse and what prose!—and this at seventeen! I beg, nay, I conjure you not to neglect so singular a talent. Perhaps I may appear not quite an unprejudiced judge, since in this instance, dearest princess, it is your too flattering partiality which has made me the subject of your charming composition. Tax me, however, with vanity, or what you please, I must be allowed to say, that I do not know when I have read four such correct and poetical lines. Nor do I the less feel their value as a proof of your affection; for both my head and heart vie in offering you their homage. I only entreat you will continue to love me, and to be persuaded that the warmth of my friendship will never cease to correspond with that of your own. I anticipate with delight the day you are to spend with me next week, and still hope that this pleasure will be more easily repeated as the days begin to shorten. I send the book which I spoke of; pray keep it as much as possible to yourself. Tell

the prince that I return him the very graceful salute he made in passing my window this afternoon. The attachment which I experience from both of you, in truth, touches my heart; and on this subject, where I feel so much gratitude, you will judge me by your thorough knowledge of its sensibility.

No. 5.

I have often erred, perhaps, in following my own suggestions, but I have not been quite so unfortunate as to be led astray by weak advisers, and among such M—— is entitled to a distinguished place. For my own part, I hold it to be an act of meanness to put oneself wantonly, and with one's eyes open too, into the power of enemies and inferiors. If my friends cannot see me without exposing themselves to danger, I would certainly forego the pleasure their society affords rather than make so bad a return for their zealous attentions as to render them in any degree a sacrifice to my own selfish indulgence. In spite of the caution so necessary for me to observe, I must nevertheless assert that portion of independence which every human creature ought jealously to maintain, not only because in thousands of cases the exertion of it is of obvious utility, but because it is quite indispensable in establishing any pretension to character. If you object to this reasoning as abstruse and inapplicable to the present purpose,

remember that my principles are not formed on vulgar views and motives, but on a pretty accurate knowledge of the human heart and character. Forgive, dear princess, all this rhodomontade, which I beg you will consign to the flames; and in saying simply that I love you, you will receive this assurance as the dictate of my heart not to be misunderstood.

No. 6.

You do not say a word in your last letter on the subject of my manuscript. I think I can read the motive of your silence; but you are quite mistaken if you imagine that I hesitate to send it from any unwillingness to confide it to your hands. No, my dear princess, the only reason why I have so long delayed to do so is, that I wished to finish the article under the head of *Differences between the Clergy and Parliament;* and though hardly worth the trouble, I was desirous of putting a little in order the thoughts which had occurred to me. Such as it is, however, with all its beauties,—that is to say, its defects, which have somewhat disheartened me,—I send it to you dirty as its sheets are, badly written, and, if possible, still worse digested; but I depend on your shewing it to no other creature, and returning it as expeditiously as you can. I will promise the same for your book and the manuscript just received. I hope you will be able some day next week to come and see me.

I really long to tell you with my own lips how much I esteem and love you, and with what truth I am always happy to subscribe myself

Your faithful friend,

CATHERINE.

No. 7.

I return you, my dear princess, both the manuscript and the book. For the former I feel many obligations. It possesses so much solid good sense that I should like to know the author, who must be a person of merit and worthy of esteem. I should be delighted to have a copy of this little memoir, though I cannot bring myself to ask for what I am aware must give a great deal of trouble; but I consider it quite a treasure to those who have really at heart the interests of the public. As for the notes on the disputes between the clergy and parliament, they are surely very common-place observations, overcharged with spleen, and written without anything dignified in style or sentiment. But now to say a few words on my own scribbling performance. Listen, dear princess, for I shall be seriously angry if you either give or allow a copy to be taken of what I have confided to you exclusively; and in this prohibition I make no exception even in your own favour, since no human being is exempt from the accidents of life. I have, as you know, the most implicit reliance on your candour; tell me then truly, is it for this

purpose that you have detained a paper three days which could not have taken you more than half an hour to read? Do not, I beseech you, delay another moment in returning it, for I begin to be uneasy about it, knowing as I do, from experience, that in a situation like mine, circumstances the most trivial are liable to the most unfavourable, and sometimes the most unjust, construction. Remove, then, my anxiety on this point, and be assured now, as ever, of my unalterable esteem and gratitude.

No. 8.

In truth, my dear princess, I am not aware how the reception I gave you the other evening should merit your acknowledgment. I am very sure, however, that if I afforded you pleasure, it was by following simply the dictates of my own feelings. I love, I esteem you, I owe you a debt of gratitude; and in allowing these sentiments to appear, you will admit that I am doing nothing more than yielding to a most natural and most gratifying impulse. Accept my thanks for the manuscript you have sent. A cold, and swelled face, has prevented my seeing the author to-day; I nevertheless hope to be at the fête to-morrow, and to have the satisfaction of seeing you there. A thousand kind regards to the prince.

No. 9.

I congratulate you, my dear princess, on your name's day, and wish you every happiness it is

possible to enjoy. The only amusing hour I spent the other evening was when you taught me that ridiculous little play, *à reveiller le chat*—a proof that nothing is so insignificant as not to be interesting in your hands. I return the memoir with thanks, and must now bid you adieu, my amiable friend. Think of my giddiness in having so nearly forgotten to thank you for the *Volosnie Loposti.**

No. 10.

I have sent your petition, my dear princess, to the *grand veneur*, Count Razoumoffsky, who has promised without hesitation that all shall be arranged as you desire. I am glad it affords me an opportunity of shewing the interest I feel in everything which gives you pleasure, though a very poor return for all your true and constant attachment. I am not at all easy about the prince's indisposition. Say everything kind from me to him, and be assured of the regard and friendship I have for you both.

No. 11.

Eleven o'clock, Saturday morning.

I have just received your letter, dear princess, and am very well disposed to believe that the person of whom you have written merits my good opinion and confidence; but as I can never see him otherwise than in a crowd, as Prince Daschkaw well

* An ornament of hair lately arrived from Paris, much worn by the *elegantes* at that time.

knows, it is impossible for me to converse with openness. I am not the less obliged for your good intentions, and beg your invalid prince, as you call him, will accept my kindest wishes.

No. 12.

The abominable cough which I have had for the last month, and which has been much increased by the bustle of the last week, has obliged me, more perhaps through precaution than necessity, to confine myself to bed these two days. Finding this, however, an unavailing remedy, I have got up without feeling better, and intend going out to-morrow and the next day. I venture on this detail, dearest princess, knowing the interest you take in everything which concerns me. Many thanks for the nice little almanack. I delivered its accompaniment to the Hetman, and shall lose no opportunity to convince you of my cordial affection.

CATHERINE.

My kind regards to our grand ambassador.

No. 13.

I will do my best, dearest princess, for the object you have in view; but my best, I fear, is but of small value. I felt for you sincerely, when I heard of the little annoyances which you have just experienced; but I console myself with the hope that they are the last. I cannot speak too favourably of your elder brother, who appears to me a young

man of infinite promise. Besides, in his affectionate zeal in whatever concerns me, I cannot but acknowledge a strong resemblance to his sister, and recognise all her kindness. How cordially ought I to love you! But I do more; I most truly esteem you—a sentiment in which every creature who has the advantage of knowing you, possessed of a grain of discrimination, must sympathize. My best regards to the prince. As to Odart, I cannot give a definite reply: having no establishment of my own, it is out of my power to make any appointment for others.

No. 14.

I am very much obliged, my dearest princess, for the two pieces of intelligence you sent me; but do not be uneasy, for I have no intercourse with O. S. As to the other, I am very well acquainted with his humour, and our conversation never goes beyond the most trifling topics. Your attachment and fidelity, dearest princess, go to my heart, and I cannot be happy till I have some opportunity of discharging a little portion of the weight of gratitude I feel. Nevertheless, I cannot permit you to abate in any degree of your kindness.

The person from whom you gained your information must have been *Saldern*. The rendezvous with Bragd made me laugh.

No. 15.

I cannot imagine who has crammed you with such extraordinary intelligence; for certainly it would be rather difficult to find letters which never existed; and no less so to discover channels of information in this case, which I most solemnly declare I am unacquainted with myself. The emperor has read every letter, and knows whatever is to be known, so that all this is nothing more than the visions of ignorance and folly. I do not comprehend anything about the papers found at the English consul's; pray tell me all you know. If his effects left behind him have been searched, it must have been at the instigation of his enemy, M. Keith. But this concerns me not. I burn all your letters.

No. 16.

I have just received your No. 3, and now return your book, and the commencement of the Chinese Journal. I am very much concerned, dearest princess, at the account of your indisposition, and to find that it is so serious. I shall neglect no opportunity of making my anxious inquiries; this is, indeed, the least I can do. Compliments to the prince. You shall have the remainder of your Chinese Journal as soon as I have read it.

No. 17.

Many thanks for your Chinese papers. Is it not remarkable that the wisest government in the known world should make no secret either of its resources or its revenues. Perhaps it is that their confidence in the former is unbounded, and that their system of economy is based on solid and permanent principles. In reply to the other subject of your letter, where you allude to that extraordinary conversation, it is impossible to think without a smile on the part you supported in argument, honourable, indeed, as it was to yourself, against your silly antagonist. The warmth you shewed in the defence of truth and probity is not to be forgotten, and proves, if proof were wanting, that these very virtues are most peculiarly your own. To say that I love and honour you for them is not enough; every one who knows you shares the same sentiments. Compliments to the prince.

No. 18.

I should be most unworthy of your affection, dearest princess, if I could ever lose sight of the daily proofs you give of it. These, indeed, are impressions on my heart not to be effaced. I cannot comprehend why any one should take a pleasure in making me appear ungrateful, whilst so many instances could be produced, I do not scruple to say it, of an opposite feeling, and such as your sister

herself, in her own person, could not, I think, be unwilling to admit. Pardon me for having forgotten to thank you for the sweet-meats, which I have not yet tasted, as during the fast anything sweet does me no good. You shall know my opinion of them, however, in due season. I will not fail to follow your advice, dictated as it is by such a prudent spirit, and from a motive which would touch a heart less sensible than mine. As for the epigram, my fair lady, its point applies to you, though you so adroitly would fix it on your friend. I will say nothing about all the fine things with which your letter abounds, for should I undeceive you on the subject of my imaginary perfections, you would love me less; it is therefore my interest to be silent; besides, you deserve this little artifice on my part, for having persuaded yourself into a belief that I possess qualities which do not belong to me. My regards to the prince, who must be much fatigued with his exertions at these two dreadful fires.

No. 19.

This letter of yours, from Moscow, dearest princess, is a great deal too flattering. If I am spoilt and become vainglorious, shall I not therefore have reason to accuse you, and all your friends? To preserve my character from such an imputation, I find it necessary to repeat every instant to myself, "*strive at least to realize the good opinion which has*

been conceived of you;" and when I begin to distrust, as I often do, my own sufficiency, I then endeavour to rally my courage, with the recollection that my country's welfare and advantage is, at all events, the object now nearest my heart, and the one most likely to occupy all my future thoughts. The services of M. Odart appear likely to be of use to me. There will be but little difficulty, I imagine, in giving him an appointment. But first tell me if you could induce your uncle to recommend him to me: if not, it does not signify, and things may take their course. You can make all the necessary pecuniary arrangements with him; but till he resigns his present post this little transaction had better rest between you and me. In fact, I do not know enough of his circumstances to be able to advise him either as to the *how* or *when;* but as he has always been a protegé of your uncle's, it is better at once to consult him. In the meantime, I will keep vacant the appointment which I design him to fill. It grieves me to find that your indisposition is increased by the departure of our ambassador. In this I feel a double regret, for you cannot doubt the interest I take in all which so nearly concerns you. Friendship, gratitude, esteem, are the ties which bind me to you, and in all these our grand ambassador* has his share.

* Prince Daschkaw was appointed by Peter the Third, ambassador to Constantinople.

No. 20.

I have just received your letter, my dear princess, and highly approve of what you have done; only, let it not appear that it is I who have withdrawn Odart from the service. Whatever your arrangements with him may be, I will subscribe to them most willingly; and this I may safely promise, that he will not die of hunger in my service. There is such a tone of melancholy in your letter, that I cannot refrain from a little expostulation, in begging you to dwell with less grief on the departure of our ambassador, who will return* to us, I trust, safe and sound; this is at least what I wish, for the consolation of all three.

No. 21.

Never did any letter of yours give me more pleasure than the one I have just received. Having promised that in returning the manuscript it should be delivered into no other hands than yours, I hold myself bound to a strict performance of my word. Your good opinion is, indeed, too dear to me to hazard the loss of it in any particular. You relieve me, however, voluntarily from the engagement in favour of my son, and I feel only so much the more

* The ambassador, in fact, did return safe and sound, without having gone further than Moscow, as the revolution which placed Catherine on the throne gave her the power of recalling him.—Ed.

your good nature. I was deeply affected, it is not to be denied, by the public demonstration of attachment which I received the other day from an innumerable concourse of people. There seemed a moment when their acclamations rose even to enthusiasm. Never was my self-love so gratified by a burst of public feeling, flattering, indeed, to such a degree, that the idea of flattery was out of the question. That others were struck by it in a similar manner is pretty evident, from your having been informed of it. I have often accompanied the late empress on these occasions, but I never witnessed such an expression of popular applause. There was something so much more general and decided than the voice of a mere party in all this, that it cannot but be a matter of pleasing communication to all our kind friends in your society. Thank your amiable husband for his remembrance of me, and fail not to write to him of what I have just mentioned. I can easily pardon your sensibility; but take care, dear princess, that it does not degenerate into weakness. Remember what Madame Deshoulières says—

> "Je suis charmé d'être né ni Grec ni Romain,
> Pour garder encore quelque chose d'humain."

This sensibility is a proof of goodness of heart; and your good sense I am sure will keep it within bounds. I cannot let you abandon yourself to melancholy, for that, indeed, would be unworthy a mind like yours. Adieu! I love you sincerely,

and will not permit you to say that it is an insignificant empire to rule over your heart. Erase from it at once such an idea.

No. 22.

My dear Princess,

I received your little note on retiring to my bedchamber last night. As the apparition of a man or woman at that hour might alarm suspicion, you had better come to me at five o'clock this afternoon, by the little stair-case, and then you can determine whether you will stay supper, or whether we shall remain in private, not to disturb our very *august society*. As to your reputation, it is better established than that of the whole calendar of saints. I am anxious for our next interview, and regret much not to have received your note in due time.

No. 23.

I am really sorry that your sore throat prevents you from coming to me, and deprives me of the pleasure of enjoying your society. But pray, how comes it that you will enact the water nymph ?* I should certainly scold you, did I not recollèct that at nineteen years of age I too had a tenderness for such adventures. To chastise you, however, a little for the injury you

* In allusion to an accident, mentioned in the early part of the Memoir, which happened to the princess at her estate near Petersburg, when she stepped into a bog, taking it for a piece of verdant meadow.

have inflicted, and with your eyes open, I will pronounce for your mortification, that a few years will effectually cure you of all these frolics. In the meantime, I believe you have deserved my pardon by the candour of your acknowledgment, though I grant it only on the condition that you will not thus endanger your health in future. My maid Catharine Ivanovna never dreams that those letters are for her which you send under her address; she instantly brings them to me, as she receives them, sealed, and of course without the smallest idea of their contents. Upon my word, I am ready to beat those *puppies* who compose your train into the mud and marshes, and do so little to discourage such giddy pranks; for I cannot afford to lose a friend like you. Alas, alas! are not all these departures *very melancholy?** Doubtless, they must overwhelm your spirits, and retard your recovery! How shall we ever console ourselves? I have destroyed your speculative epistle, and when we meet we can talk over its contents.

No. 24.

Thursday, after dinner.

If to-morrow should be fine, pray let me know if you can accompany me to Catarinenhof, and say whether you choose to go on horseback or in a carriage. I ask this question, as I suspect you

* She speaks ironically of the departure of Peter the Third for Denmark, for which preparations were making at that time.—Ed.

were bled in the foot yesterday; and I am exceedingly anxious to prevent your making an effort which might be injurious to your health, knowing that you are a person to attempt impossibilities for my sake. You must allow me, therefore, to be a little careful of you for my own indulgence. Be exact, I beg, in saying what you are equal to, because if to-morrow does not suit, we can easily postpone the party till Saturday. To put you in thorough good humour, I will finish this letter in a way I know you approve, by telling you with sincerity that I shall always be, my dear princess, your faithful friend, CATHERINE.

No. 25.

Ten o'clock in the morning.

I am just come from the Manège, so fatigued with riding that my hand trembles; I can scarcely hold my pen. Between five and six o'clock I intend going to Catarinenhof, where I shall change my dress, as it would not be prudent to pass through the streets in man's attire. I advise you to drive thither direct in your own carriage, lest you should be mistaken for a cavalier in good earnest, and of course be set down as my lover. We can remain together as long as usual, though we must not sup. After your note of yesterday, and before I received that of to-day, I had every inclination to quarrel with one who would disown me

as her friend. I must, however, in spite of this, ever remain your faithful CATHERINE.

M. Odart shall be welcome. One of your gay attendants, Count Stroganoff, was with me to-day at the Manège. Adieu, dear princess; you will have nothing to eat and drink at our party, but the sincerest joy on my part at seeing you.

No. 26.

Extract of a Letter from the Empress to Count Stroganoff.

" With respect to this dear princess, who never forgets me in any circumstance, what have I to say, but to repeat that I feel for her the most unbounded gratitude. I perfectly well know that every proof she gives me of her friendship is but a feeble expression of her devoted attachment. No effort, however, on her part can at all augment the sentiment which I already feel. She possesses and has long possessed my whole heart, and it is the only tribute I can offer her. Do you understand?"

[Between the foregoing notes and those which follow there appears an interval of nineteen years.]

Petersburg, Dec. 22nd, 1781.

In thanking you, madam, for the plan and regulations of the new Lazaretto established by the

Grand Duke of Tuscany, which you were so good as to send, I must be permitted to express to you, at the same time, the satisfaction I have felt on finding you not only always occupied for the good of your country, but actuated also by the most zealous attachment to my person. The same sentiments, I am sure, have been imbibed by your children, who possess a twofold title to my interest, from the affection I have experienced from both their parents. I have ordered that my godson should have a commission in the guards, in whichsoever regiment you may prefer; and in assuring you of the continuation of my regard, I have pleasure in adding, that it is no less sincere than affectionate. CATHERINE.

Czarskoselo, Aug. 19th, 1782.

If you have been gratified by what I have done in providing you a residence in town and in the country, believe me, madam, that it is a real satisfaction to find that you are pleased with them, and more so to be assured of the sentiments which you continue to entertain for me. I hope to hear all this repeated from your own lips, if you will come to me on Sunday. CATHERINE.

Monday, eight o'clock in the morning.

You are an earlier riser than I am, my fair lady, and have sent me a note for my breakfast. In replying to you, I shall begin my day more agreeably

than usual. First, then, since you do not absolutely refuse my proposal,* I may forgive all you mean to say by the word *incapacity*, though I shall reserve to myself the opportunity of time and place to present you with my own commentary upon it. What you are pleased to call my *right*, I have long known to call by the more appropriate name of my *gratitude;* but it is quite a new discovery to find that I have outrivalled Dame Nature herself in endowing you with all the strength of your character. However, be this as it may, rest assured that on all occasions where you think I can be of use it will afford me pleasure to assist you, both in word and deed.

June 11th, 1783.

As you begged me to let you know when I should fix on my journey into Finland, I have the honour to acquaint you that next Thursday is the day proposed. I calculated on seeing you yesterday, but as you did not come I send this line.

Thursday morning, Nov. 16th, 1783.

I beg you, madam, to send me the correspondence of the supposed tailor,† and whatever I have sent which is not yet printed.

* To become director of the Academy.

† Compositions of the empress in the Russian language, published in the reviews of the month.—Ed.

Czarskoselo, 7th May, 1784.

I received your letter and the two books this morning, and as the one entitled *Nature and Art* may be useful, I shall not find fault with the paper. The prints are, I think, as you remark, very superior to those in the original. I wish you a pleasant journey,* and beg you to rest as convinced of the continuance of my gratitude and friendship, as I feel of those sentiments which attach you to me.

Czarskoselo, Jan. 6th, 1787.

MADAM,—You have acted on this as on all other occasions with sense and prudence. Written adieux are certainly best. Those who possess real sensibility have no need to make a display of it. In fact, on occasions when one wants courage to part, sensibility is a little in the way; and on this point I think our feelings agree. I am entirely persuaded of your attachment to me; and I hope, madam, you are equally so of my own gratitude. I will not fail to write, though on the subject of my health you need not, I think, feel much uneasiness. Adieu, madam, most affectionately.

Kiof, Feb. 3rd, 1787.

This morning, I received your letter, as well as the periodical work which accompanied it. On the

* A journey of a few weeks to Moscow.

29th of last month I arrived here in perfect health. During the journey I gave balls in all the towns I passed through, and found multitudes ready to receive me wherever I went. The *Sçavan* who accompanies me is here in his element, visiting churches and other places of interest all the day long. Your son is here, and appears in excellent health. Adieu, dear madam, most affectionately.

May 27th, 1788.

MADAM,—I have given orders that M. King's letter should be translated. In the meantime, I beg of you to thank him for his book, though I cannot read it, not being sufficiently acquainted with the English language.

June 27th, 1789.

MADAM,—So many things have perpetually occurred to occupy and distract my attention, that I trust you will excuse me for not having immediately replied to your letter of the 25th. M. Grassovitsky will send Bernouilly's package from Berlin to your house; and I beg you to thank him in my name for the trouble he has taken. I am very sensible of your kindness, and accept with thanks your good wishes for to-morrow. On this as on every other subject you cannot doubt my gratitude.

Czarskoselo, July 21st, 1789.

The most ignorant, madam, cannot but view with admiration the stupendous work which the Russian Academy has just sent forth into the world, and which has not been in preparation more than six years. I congratulate you sincerely on the occasion; and as I have a passion for prefaces, I shall read this of our great Dictionary quite through. On turning over its leaves, I have already observed the opinion of the Russian Academy on an abundance of subjects, either to be admitted or rejected, and on many words of which the generality of people had little or no knowledge. The honourable notice which the Academy has been pleased to take of the poor little dictionary of *The Comparison of all the Languages in the World*, cannot but give it a credit which it could scarcely hope to obtain, having supplied only about a dozen words or so to the immortal work which has just appeared. Proud, however, it may doubtless be of this little service rendered to its voluminous younger brother. With every sentiment which you deserve from me, madam, believe me ever yours.

It is a pity that there are some errors of the press in the preface; amongst others observe in page xi. The ignorant will find, in the paragraph in page xv., an ample subject for their remarks; but let me not, by any indiscreet babbling on my part, anticipate their clamours.

June 6th, 1791.

I have just received your report of the last month, and the beautiful *pierre gravée* accompanying it, which merits indeed my cordial thanks. I accept it with pleasure, as one of the many proofs of your regard; but I accept it with one condition, dear lady, that it does not pass in reality for the celebrated one of Michael Angelo Buonarotti, which, on the authority of Montfaucon, who has given a full description of it, is belonging to the cabinet of the former kings of France. The account, therefore, which you have received from Italy does not merit the honour of a translation at your hands. I know not whether what I say may be deemed *à propos* or not, but I verily believe it to be the truth. There are a set of people who may be ignorant or not in these matters, but whose interest it certainly is neither to undeceive themselves nor others. *Portez-vous bien.* Your sentiments for me I know are unchangeable.

Nov. 22nd, 1794.

There is more than one difficulty, madam, attending your daughter's departure from Moscow; she is in the house of the English minister, who has given security for her in a small sum of money, and *Withfort** is commissioned to interest himself

* Probably Whitworth is here meant.

in the affair. It is therefore necessary, in the first place, that your daughter's trustees should come to some arrangement with him, in order that a sufficient sum of money may be transmitted for the journey. My interference would, on this account, be injudicious at present.

[The following are from a collection of letters and notes of the Empress Catherine to Princess Daschkaw, without date, and unnumbered.]

Amongst the papers which you have sent me, madam, there is one which I have hunted for and cannot find, which ends with the words—"*le ris tenta le rat*," &c. Pray look for it, and send it me as soon as possible. As to the essay of my friend the Canon, I can do nothing without his counsel; and as it never entered his head to offend any human being, which I think is manifest from the playfulness of his tone, he is not likely to trespass on the rules which you have prescribed. I am sincerely sorry to find you are not quite well.

I have read the little piece, madam, which accompanies this note, and find nothing whatever to object to, unless it be that, as the Bacha and Kirgis are Mahometans, critics might find fault with the

high-priest and temple in the last scene, as savouring too much of paganism, and therefore destroying the uniformity of costume. I trust the indisposition you complain of will prove as slight as I could wish it.

MADAM,—I have just received your letter, with a copy of the work which carried the prize in the Academy; but I have not found in your packet the report which you announced to me. I send the sheets of my grand dictionary.

Wednesday morning.

I have this moment received the letter which you sent me by Prince Potemkin, and be assured, madam, I will take the most particular care in whatever regards the fortune and interest of your son. As I am but just come out of the bath, I can receive only yourself. You must therefore beg the prince to accept my kind wishes for his journey. Though you will naturally feel his loss, do not take his departure too much to heart, but endeavour to support his absence with courage, and be assured of the unceasing interest I take in all your concerns.

MADAM,—I have just received your letter and list of pictures, but as I should be afraid of in-

juring them by the carriage, I must suspend my wish of seeing them till I come to town.

Allow me to come to you in person* to offer my congratulations on your fête-day, as well as my thanks in prose for the beautiful verses I found on my table accompanying the seal and its impression. Very sorry that your indisposition continues.

I am very much concerned, madam, at the indisposition which confines you to the house. Many thanks for the letter of M. De Lalande, which announces so many things of interest. Pray procure for me the famous cameo of Jupiter Serapis. As to the vase† and its antiques, I will receive them only from your hands, and in exchange for the cases of natural history which Strekalof has only to withdraw from the bank, which may be done the beginning of January. I shall make no reply to the gratifying things you say of me, till I have the pleasure of doing it by and bye in person.

* A portrait of the empress was sent with this note.

† The empress was desirous of possessing a vase studded with antiques, which had belonged to Catherine the First, and was then in the Museum of the Academy. Princess Daschkaw playfully proposed that she should purchase it, and the cases of natural history here alluded to were to be the price.—Ed.

Princess Daschkaw is requested, if she approves, to insert in her new journal, which meets with so much approbation, the accompanying preface.

I return with thanks the very interesting letter of M. De Lalande on aërostatic globes. As long as they are unprovided with rudders, they must be surely left to the mercy of the winds. Be assured of my unceasing regard.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, madam, and the translation of Klopstock's Messiah, which I must confess I never could comprehend even in the original, but which will give much pleasure, no doubt, to our mystics, and some profit, I hope, to your concerns in trade. Be assured of my sympathy in all your sufferings, both of body and spirit. Adieu! I shall give orders that the cameos of Bayers, which I am acquainted with from the pastes, should be sent by a courier.

Whilst I inquire after your health, madam, let me ask also if the late packet of M. Cassini to the Academy contains anything curious or interesting, on the subject of the comet, for example, which, it is supposed, will make its appearance in eight or

ten days. If it is not very inconvenient, you will oblige me by an immediate reply. Good night.

I believe, madam, you were not dissatisfied with the contributions of the Canon; and if so, I dare say you will not reject the accompanying trifle. The *Bambinelli** would be glad to know whether their joint produce will find admission into the eighth volume. If my wishes are accomplished, you will find yourself already much better.

I received your letter yesterday, madam, and the papers annexed to it, in which I read with equal pleasure the sentiments you have expressed for me, and the account of the order which you are endeavouring to establish. On re-perusing a certain paper with attention, I find it less objectionable than I at first thought it. If it were possible to have it printed, together with the answers, the satire would be rendered harmless, although it might possibly give occasion to equal if not greater impertinences. It comes, beyond a doubt, from the grand chamberlain, and it is in revenge for the portrait of the *irresolute man* in the second volume

* This has reference to some local *badinage*, and means one of the names by which the empress and some of her society were known as authors. One of the courtiers who wrote signed himself the *Canon*. It was a Narischkin.

of ———. Pray observe that the fourteenth point is twice introduced, for the purpose, perhaps, of withdrawing one without any derangement of the order observed. Is not this precaution, so paltry in itself, very like the grand chamberlain, who in all his movements makes one step in advance and another retiring?

In returning the miserable performance you sent me, evidently from the pen of the author of the Questions, I have the honour to enclose a sheet ready prepared for the press, to which I have added only one remark, and that, perhaps, of no value.

I am very sorry on account of the cough, madam, which deprives me of the pleasure of seeing you, and regret to say that I am in the unlucky plight of being utterly ignorant of the history of your botanical garden. If, however, you are disposed to select a spot of ground for this garden, which can be obtained without injury to any person or to any establishment, I will do my best to procure it for the Academy, where they may dig and sow as much as ever they please. If you grow into a sunflower, dear madam, I shall be like the prophet who reposed at Nineveh under the shade of this or some other plant, infinitely pleased with one who loves me well enough to take root for my sake.

[Princess Daschkaw having occasion to deliver a discourse before the Academy, in which she had introduced the praises of the empress, sent a copy of it to her majesty, which occasioned the following observations :—]

To speak with more modesty, would it not be better instead of the word, *nobody*, to substitute *not all*. Erase, I entreat you, the expression, *without equal;* otherwise, by such hyperbole, you will out-do Madame de Secondat, daughter-in-law of the President Montesquieu. Erase, also, as a *beneficent Deity*,—an apotheosis does not accord with the Christian religion; and I fear I have no title to saintship, having placed the temporalities of the clergy under some restrictions. I have nothing to say against Saturday; all the days of the week are pretty equal to me, but for the presentations, which make Sunday rather fatiguing. I have run through the work which Prince Galitzin sent from Vienna: it is very declamatory, and the author does not appear to me to be too clearly informed on his subject. With regard to the discourse of M. R——, I have written in large letters the word *aside*.

J'ai l'honneur d'être
Tout ce qu'il faut au bas d'une lettre.

I return you this work, which is really charming. There is nothing in it superfluous, and

nothing which ought to be retrenched. After to-morrow, we shall set about the historical articles for the eighth volume. I have ordered Euler, the son, the two hundred roubles which you desired. Adieu. I am sorry to hear of your indisposition; but I trust we shall soon meet. The work of the grand equerry becomes superb and voluminous.

I return you these verses, which are beautiful. The history shall be ready at the end of the week.

I have just received your report, madam, and not without surprise, to say the truth, at the question you have asked, because I cannot conceive how the least doubt could have been entertained on the subject. Not only yourself, madam, but all who well discharge the trust committed to them, merit my approbation; nor do I remember a case of this nature in which I ever refused it. I entreat you to confide as implicitly in the sentiments which I entertain for you, as I do in the attachment which you have ever manifested for me. I shall listen with pleasure to the proposals you have to make for the employment of the sum which your economical administration has saved to the Academy. I am very sorry to hear of the continuance of your indisposition.

I regret to find that you have any uneasiness about the resolution which I may have to take respecting the accounts of the Academy. Pray tranquillize yourself on this head. I hope after tomorrow to give my attention towards settling this affair; and I dare flatter myself that justice will be done, and no interest compromised. In the meantime, rest satisfied that every assurance I receive of your friendship and attachment is as gratifying as ever, and that I am truly sensible of all their value.

The newly-born production has been read with great attention and no little interest this afternoon. It is a piece of very great merit; and with such as these the Russian theatre cannot fail to flourish. I see nothing to delay its representation after Easter. I return it, indeed, with a view to its speedy appearance, and with many thanks for your attention, and for all the obliging things you have taken occasion to say. In one part there is a little repetition, where the same thing is said in the same manner as in a few sentences before it. It would be easy to give at least another turn to the expression, and I have marked the passage with a pencil. In fine, I return the piece, according to your desire, quite certain that it will be well received by the public.

Do not shew this to a living creature: when you have read it, return me the manuscript. N.B. In

the last page there is a chronological error respecting the marriage of Henry the Second.

Saturday evening, six o'clock.

I received your note yesterday, madam, and the two dissertations which you have condemned me to read. I was prevented from answering it immediately; and afterwards, pardon me in saying that I forgot it. Accept, however, now my acknowledgment; and let me ask you at the same time to ascertain from the Academy what was the state of the barometer on the 26th and 27th of January of this year, and how it stands to-day, the 26th of March. I hope, with all my heart, you are suffering less from indisposition.

I have just received your letter, madam, and will inquire immediately into my finances, to see whether there is sufficient money at my disposition and unappropriated to make the purchase you propose. You may be quite sure that in this, as in everything else, I shall be delighted to do whatever will give you pleasure. I ordered two hundred copies of the comedy. Ninety only have been sent. Do not let them forget that one hundred and ten are due to me.

Catalogue for catalogue; I send you one which is no unfit accompaniment to your collection of

pierres gravées; and when I have the honour of seeing you, we will converse on the contents of your letter, which this may serve to acknowledge. Strekaloff must pay the *lettre de change* which you have for the head of Serapis.

Mon Cœur,—I have just received your letter, and all the pretty things annexed. The report, with the Register of Manuscripts, I must beg to keep a little, that I may run them over at leisure, which I cannot command at present. I return you the letter [here follows a sentence in Russ] for the author of *What has been, and what has not been,** which may certainly be printed, but not so, observe, as to set the said author by the ears with the *Swan singing its recantation;* about whose name, by-the-bye, I never was mistaken. The scrap therefore which I send must have precedence in the Journal before the confessional ode of my friend the *Swan,* in virtue of which the author of *What has been, and what has not been* can declare that all ulterior disputes on these questions are hereby precluded.

In reading over the piece of *The Pedlar* I could have sworn it was from my own pen, so close an

* The title of a somewhat satirical composition, written by the empress, which was printed in the Journal of the Academy.

imitation does it appear to me. With regard to its criticisms, it is no less true than severe; but beware of the answer. In order to make you quite easy, I intend in future to lay an embargo on all the sheets which fall into my hands, as marking with the stamp of secrecy those which are already printed is not quite so easy a matter. I have now only to thank you for the words with which you have supplied the *Canon*, and have the honour to be, &c.

On opening a letter from Field-Marshal Munrick, I found another inclosed, and as I am in the habit of receiving two or three in the same cover, I broke the seal quite unconsciously, but what was my surprise on finding it addressed to you! To you therefore I now despatch it, with an acknowledgment of my mistake. I hope it will afford you satisfaction, and that your generosity will prompt you to answer it. You ought to be flattered by the honour, and I edified by the speculations it unfolds; but I am obliged at this moment to arrest my pen, and deprive you of the advantage of the remarks I was going to make.

I have just received your report, madam, accompanied by the letter of the list of words annexed, for which I am much obliged. Be so good as to have the same words rendered in the Ibero-Celtic

language precisely in the order in which they stand, and numbered according to the list delivered by Soimonoff to the Academy.

Bachmeister may save himself the trouble of copying the lists of the dialects of Siberia, because they are already in my possession. I have taken care not to ask for a translation of Herberstein into Russ, so disgusting appear to me the horrors which he recounts. I have not read Strikoffsky, as hitherto it is only met with in Polish or in Latin. The sooner the lists are made out the better. Believe me as sensible as ever to the expressions of your regard.

There has just appeared a Russian tragedy, called *Vadine of Novogorod*, printed at the press of the Academy, according to its title-page. It is said to be not a little severe and bitter against sovereign authority. You will do well to stop the sale of it till I have time to look at it. Good night. Have you read it?

Here are the most beautiful things imaginable, which I send you as a proper accompaniment to your pretty piece of an harangue; being quite persuaded that all is for the best in this best of all possible worlds.

I have to acknowledge, madam, the printed sheets which you have sent me along with your letter, and

I am pleased to find that the book which I lent you has not been altogether useless, and still more so that you are disposed to erase many of the words which are inserted in these printed sheets. When all foreign words and words of trivial signification are omitted, the residue will not be very considerable. It is indeed to be desired that this register of words should furnish also an explanation of their meaning as well as of their derivation. It will then become, instead of being dry and meagre as at present, a work of some utility. As it is, I can look upon it in no other light than as a mere vocabulary of words nowise naturalized or in general use. For my own part, I protest I do not understand half of them. Besides, the proper names, with their diminutives, are not much calculated to embellish the language. The French Academy purified the French tongue by effacing all its barbarisms.

I received, last night, the letter which you judged it right to send me. Prince Repnin may be assured that as soon as I have the opportunity of appointing a successor to Goltz, I shall not fail to nominate some one to the office. I perceive, madam, no cause of alarm in any of the circumstances surrounding me, and I am not naturally subject to fear. This is the only observation I have to make on that article. That there are several people to whom I

am incapable of giving complete satisfaction, it is not difficult to conceive. Some there are who are anxious for more power, and others just as desirous that their adversaries should have less. Many also regret the loss of public profits and appointments; but as I have no other interest or wish than for the general good, and the good of every individual, I consider my own cause identified with the public welfare, and leave the rest to Providence.

" Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte."*

Prince Repnin may be assured of my esteem, and of the pleasure with which I shall see him again; and you, princess, of the consideration which you merit. Send him this note, if you think proper.

* Racine's Athalie, act 1st, scene 1st.

FOUR LETTERS

OF

CATHERINE THE SECOND

TO

MADEMOISELLE LEOFFSCHIN.

Some apology may be thought due for inserting the four following letters of the empress, which have no connexion with the subject of the preceding narrative; but the Editor cannot so far mistrust her judgment as to doubt of their being favourably received, as illustrative of that kindness and playful gaiety which this great sovereign was always ready to exercise when the occasion suited it. No person was perhaps a more consummate mistress of the art of pleasing than Catherine the Second. She knew how to address herself to every age and every humour, and to touch the secret springs of character, so as to call into play each several quality of the mind and heart. The young person to whom the following letters were written was a certain Mlle. Leoffschin, of a noble family, left an orphan at four years old, and placed at that age in the Convent of *Demoiselles Nobles*, which the empress had just founded. She was, indeed, the first pupil admitted into it; and

either from this circumstance, or from her early misfortune in having lost her parents, or from her good conduct and application,—perhaps from all these causes combined,—she was very early distinguished by the empress from amongst the other young ladies of the convent.

A niece of Princess Daschkaw's, who was educated in this establishment, and who gave the Editor a copy of the letters, had often heard of the empress's visits to the convent about the period when they were written, which the elder members of the institution used to speak of with enthusiasm.

In order to understand the allusions which are made in some of these letters to the *Browns*, the *Blues*, &c., it will be necessary to observe that, according to the rules of the convent, a young person for the first three years after admission is a pupil in the first class, which is called the *Browns*, from the colour of their dress; she is then admitted into the second class, that of the *Blues;* and again, after three years more, is advanced into the third class, that of the *Greys*. Mlle. Leoffschiu was on the point of promotion into the fourth or last class, that of the *Whites*, when the first and second of the letters were written, and already in it when she received the third and fourth. After having completed the usual course at the convent, she was taken to court by her majesty, and received the cipher of the maids of honour. She soon afterwards married; and died young.

1.

I was about to order my carriage, as soon as I had read your very nice letter, to drive directly to the convent, but, no offence to my dear browned-faced little lion,* the extreme cold has warned me not to stir out. It is true, I frisk about sometimes, but not, perhaps, quite so much as you; and though I find you a very amiable little person, yet the air of your grand corridors is a little too refreshing for me during the present month. As soon as ever the hard frosts are over I shall certainly come and take a part for a whole afternoon in all your different occupations, if mine (for I am not without my occupations also) will permit. My compliments to all the society; but embrace, I beg you, my old acquaintances *les sœurs grises*. Tell them the pleasure I have in witnessing their progress in every way; and to give them a proof of what I say, I intend to come some evening to enjoy a game at *Fox and Geese* with the whole society. My compliments to Madame de Lafond, to whom you owe so many obligations, and who loves you so tenderly.

CATHERINE.

2.

Tell me, Levuschka, would your own dear little prattling, if I could even prattle like you, be

* Levuschka, a play upon the word Leoffschin.

sufficient to reply to everything you talk about? First and foremost, you say whatever comes into your head. You congratulate me on my names-day; you scold me for having gone into the country; you invite me to come and see that abominable little garden of yours; and then run off into so many other vagaries, that it would take quires of paper to answer you in detail. You must therefore excuse me, though I can never allow you to abate a single word of all you have to say to me. Your pen, your tongue, and your heart, get on admirably; and this I must say in answer, I love you dearly. Ah, Levuschka! *Soubrette* in your theatricals, if you please, but not so at heart! And do you really run up two hundred and twenty-one steps every day, to see at a distance this chateau of mine, so much an object of dislike to all your society for taking me to such a distance from you? My thanks are surely due for all the pretty things you have addressed to me, as well as for the art you possess of attracting even grave nuns, and drawing them out of their cells by your gaieties, and for twenty other reasons besides. That *Dame Croupillac** surely saves her paper for her law suits, so very cramped is her hand-writing, and so concise the style of her compliment. I must acknowledge, however, she

* This name, as well as the preceding one of the *soubrette*, and some following ones, with the qualities referred to, allude to some private theatricals with which the members of the convent had amused themselves.

plays her part well, and makes even the sun a dupe of her chicanery, when she wishes him the honour of an eclipse; such is the effect of habit. Lise, too, the gentle Lise, instead of being perfectly happy in having so often espoused her faithful *Euphemon*, and notwithstanding her pretty compliment on my fête, must upbraid me also with occupying a chateau glittering with gold. And what shall I say of Euphemon, who having squandered all his substance with his spendthrift friends, comes to make me an offer of his heart? Well, then, I accept him, in spite of Lise, and even of Dame Croupillac, which latter I destine one day to be the bride of Sieur *Freienfat*, to avenge the cause of my much-injured chateau; and at the marriage I shall insist on Demoiselle Bareshoff leading off the ball, as a punishment for daring to suppose that the snow of Petersburg is at all comparable to that of Czarskoselo.

The apparition above the horizon of Demoiselle Nelidoff is a phenomenon to be viewed much nearer than is possible for me at present, and at a moment when she least expects it; soon, perhaps very soon. Pray that the ice may take its departure as speedily as may be; and in the meantime embrace for me, all at once, all the dear little makers of noise and mischief, not forgetting to thank them for all the kind things they have addressed to me. My compliments to Madame de Lafond.

CATHERINE.

3.

Here is my answer to your two letters, mademoiselle; and be it observed, *en passant*, the first was written in so diminutive a hand, that if you continue to perfect yourself in it, you will soon oblige me to be at the expense of a pair of spectacles in order to read your letters; but with spectacles or without, be assured they will never fail to be equally acceptable. Be so good as to tell Madame de Lafond from me that the tall young lady in the white costume, of the parrot nose and brunette complexion, who hailed my coming to the convent, and explored my departure with such a magazine of appropriate ohs and ahs—tell her she writes so unaffectedly that her letters delight me; and pleased as I am to see fair nature have its course without effort and without restraint, I find the dear Levuschka, with all her sprightliness and all her giddiness, exactly to my taste. Go on, mademoiselle, go on; and in three years hence I shall come and carry you away from the convent, and then tears and struggles will be in vain; for spite of yourself you will behold that very Czarskoselo of which you have formed so indifferent an opinion, but which you will then acknowledge, notwithstanding your present humour, (for I know you love the truth,) to be a charming place, infinitely superior to the summer palace. At the latter, indeed, I well remember how its beauties were once embellished by flocks of my white young

friends (whilst other birds of gaudy plumage fluttered along its walks) who turned the heads of half the town. Observe, I beg, to what consequences young ladies' movements sometimes lead. Ever since that day the town has been inundated *de vers;* not, indeed, by such as destroy the leaves of my choicest shrubs, but those which poets breed when animated by objects which inspire their imagination. I shall come to town some day to see how Madame de Lafond has arranged all the holes and corners of her *bourgeoise* habitation, of which you have given me a description.

Thanks to your special care, I hope the little kittens you speak of continue not to disturb you with their mewing, if I may be permitted to borrow the language of your society—perhaps I should rather say your own. Do not alarm yourself if M. Bettsky persist in his offer of teaching you to swim. At his age, in feats of exercise, which require either strength or address, people are much more apt to say than to do. Take him at his word, I advise you, and his embarrassment will be much greater than yours. He will reply, "Well, very well, mademoiselle," and will defer his project to another day. You may again demand of this same master of swimming, why he has placed in my chamber in the winter palace a Turkish sofa. He places everything, it is true, in my apartments, according to his fancy, except a certain *meuble d'affection*, done by Mlle. Mollschauoff, your own little

dear face, to which I have assigned a situation, or rather you yourself have done so, from which it shall not be removed. If you find any obscurity in my meaning, apply to your governesses for an explanation, who best knew the young lady, and therefore can best give it. I think the serenade you received from Prince Orloff was a very pretty idea. He loves to please, and feels much affection for you, whom he has known from the cradle. He loves also his country, and the institution in which you are placed, as tending to its good. He loves you, too, in particular; and do you know why? Because you are a little person very much to be loved.

Well, is my letter sufficiently long? Stay, I have yet to desire you to salute from me your brats of *Brown*, to caress your monkeys *Blue*, to embrace the sisters *Grey*, and to throw your arms about the neck of the tippets *White*, my more ancient friends. Make also a most profound courtesy to Madame de Lafond, and, in the act of doing it, let your countenance beam with all the sentiments with which she has inspired you.

CATHERINE.

4.

I believe, mademoiselle, I ought to draw two conclusions from your letter—first, that you are sad when you do not see me; and, secondly, as its opposite, that you are very gay when you do see

me. The weather, alas! is now disposed to rain. It is the journey to Moscow which distresses you. Tears then are about to flow; there were some traces of them visible when I last saw you; and, to avoid verifying that naughty proverb which says, "when one woman begins to weep, all the rest weep also," I found it prudent to take myself quietly away. Only see how unjust the world is, and how they disparage our sensibility. But in fine, mademoiselle, dry your tears; on my return from Moscow I shall come to the convent to carry you away with me. You will then see me constantly and without restraint, and will soon learn to chatter away like any of our court magpies. Present my compliments to Madame de Lafond, and best wishes for her speedy recovery. My salutations of body and spirit to the rest of the sisterhood. Please to remark, though my hand-writing is less good than yours, my orthography is somewhat better.

CATHERINE.

LETTERS

OF THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

LETTERS &c.

OF THE

PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

The circumstances under which the two following letters were written, referred to as they are in the letters themselves, will make up for any omission with regard to dates.

The first was addressed to Principal Robertson, as would appear by some allusion made to it in the Memoir (chap. 14), with which distinguished person the princess had been in correspondence on a subject which then engrossed her thoughts and employed all her energies—the education of her son. The letter was written soon after her arrival in England, preparatory to her journey towards Edinburgh, where she was about to establish herself during Prince Daschkaw's term of study at its university.

It will be read with interest, as evincing not only the strength and tenderness of her parental feelings, but the decision of character with which she set about the performance of a most important duty, as well as her judicious views in the plan of study,

and in the time to be appropriated to it, which her own anxious reflection had suggested, and which are here submitted to the judgment of her more learned and more experienced correspondent.

The second letter is addressed to her son, towards the conclusion of his academical career, when she proposes a course of travel for his further improvement, and points out, in a manner not unworthy of the best instructors and directors of youth even of the present day, the advantages to be derived from a personal acquaintance with foreign countries, and the objects which ought to engage the attention of an inquisitive and diligent traveller.

Of the discretion, the good sense, the just conceptions, the probity, and high-mindedness exhibited in these letters, there can be but one opinion; but in order to form a fair estimation of the merits of the writer, it should not be forgotten that they were written at a period (nearly sixty years ago) when the objects of an enlightened education were neither so well defined, nor understood, nor pursued, as at present; written too by one whose sex had by no means kept pace with the other sex in the acquisition or appreciation of knowledge, and whose country, it may be observed without disparagement, was then somewhat behindhand with the rest of Europe. Princess Daschkaw, however, was a person not to be measured by the standard of her own times or country. She was one who, in her acquirements, and more especially in her views,

had advanced, as Abbé Raynal remarks, in a letter which forms part of this collection, " far beyond the age in which she lived;" and whose life, it may be added, would not have been without distinction in the darkest, or without honour in the most enlightened days.

It is therefore not unfit to remind the reader of the period when these letters were written, that their pretensions may be estimated in reference rather to past than to modern times.

1.

TO PRINCIPAL ROBERTSON.

London, the 5th of October.

I HAVE the satisfaction, sir, to acknowledge the favour of your letter, and in hastening to express my thanks, I will take the liberty of offering a little explanation on some points of my former letter, which it would appear, from the one I have just received, had not been rendered sufficiently clear.

It never was at all my desire that my son should be removed at present from under my own roof and superintendence; because, after a very strict self-examination, I am quite convinced that I am not a person to spoil my children, and that the tenderness I feel for them would, on the contrary, only tend to render me the more diligently cautious in watching over their moral as well as physical good;

secondly, because my mode of life is liable to no restraint or embarrassment from the presence of my children. There would therefore be no sort of inconvenience in our being together. If, indeed, it had been my wish to have placed my son in any other house than my own, it would have been on the supposition that he might have enjoyed the advantage of being in yours; for in you alone, sir, I should have the sort of confidence necessary on my part to such a separation.

With regard to Mr. Robinson, I know him sufficiently by reputation to esteem him infinitely as a man of letters, and to feel a perfect conviction that he will be of the greatest utility to my son in the course of his studies. I trust, therefore, he will be one of the professors whose lectures Prince Daschkaw will have the advantage of attending; but I have a strong objection, independent of any other consideration, to my son's being in any house where several other young people are also admitted, as I am much more jealous on the subject of his character and manners than I am anxious about his having many acquaintance.

I cannot, however, deprive myself of the hope, that if you, sir, will not permit me to consider you the director of my son's studies, you will nevertheless not refuse his mother the benefit of your counsel and advice on some particulars relating to them. It is indeed this very hope which tempts me now to lay before you a little sketch of the plan

and course which I have proposed for him; in order that I may obtain the advantage of your opinion, and regulate or change my own in conformity with the views which your superior knowledge and experience may suggest; begging you at the same time to believe that I shall consider the candid expression of your own sentiments on such an occasion the most flattering proof of your esteem which I can possibly receive.

It is necessary I should just observe, that the method of arriving at promotion in my country is a very honourable one, and differs in a great measure from that of most others, where court favour and intrigue so universally prevail as the sole means of advancement. With us, it is indispensable for each individual who would rise to any station of eminence to commence his career of service at a very early period of life. Hence it becomes impossible, as you will perceive, that four years longer can be devoted to the prosecution of studies not immediately connected with that branch of service to which my son is destined; for these four years, with two more for foreign travel, added to thirteen now past, would bring him to his twentieth year before he entered on the duties of a profession, in which it is my ambition that he should rise only by the same honourable exertions, and the same steps, by which his ancestors rose to distinction before him. Disavowing, therefore, and disdaining, every low art of promoting his interest, with me it becomes a pecu-

liar care to prevent any intervening distraction or obstacle which might turn him away from, or unnecessarily retard his commencement of, a career which, to be successfully pursued, must not be too long delayed. Besides the duties of a mother, there are others also, which, it must be remembered, I have to fulfil—namely, those of the guardian of my son; and as such, I have to reconcile the present with the future, and to adapt general views to the peculiar customs and localities, if I may so express myself, of our own country.

Here then, sir, is a sketch of the plan of study which I had formed, with notices of what he has already done or commenced.

Languages.—Latin.—The difficulties of this are already overcome.

English.—The prince understands perfectly all the prose writers, and the poets tolerably.

German.—He understands all he reads.

French.—With this language he is quite as familiar as with his own.

Belles Lettres.—He is acquainted with most of the best works, and his taste is already more refined than is usual at his age. It is indeed rather to be feared that he is over severe in his criticisms, which may be considered somewhat of a characteristic failing.

Mathematics.—A very important branch of study. In this he has already made some progress,

being able to solve some complicated propositions, but I wish him to continue it, with algebra.

Civil and Military Architecture.—This I wish him to understand thoroughly.

History and the Constitutions of Government.—He knows universal history, and the particular histories of Germany, France, and England. These he must go over again, and occupy himself much with them at home with his tutor.

I should then wish him to study logic and the philosophy of reasoning. 2. Experimental physics. 3. A notion of chemistry. 4. Philosophy and natural history. 5. Natural rights, public and universal rights, and the rights of individuals; and these as applicable to the laws and usages of the people of Europe. 6. Ethics. 7. Politics.

A subdivision of these studies to occupy two years and a half, into five half-yearly terms.

First half-year.—Languages, rhetoric, and belles lettres, history, the constitutions of governments, mathematics, logic.

2nd.—Languages, history and constitution of governments, mathematics, the philosophy of reasoning, experimental physics, fortification, drawing.

3rd.—Languages and belles lettres, history and constitution of governments, fortification, rights of nature; rights public, universal, and positive; physiology and natural history; drawing, mathematics.

4th.—Ethics, mathematics, fortification, rights of people, universal and positive; general principles of positive jurisprudence; civil architecture.

5th.—Ethics, repetition of physics, the first principles of chemistry; afterwards a general repetition of the whole.

This, sir, is pretty nearly the idea which I have formed of the course of study which my son ought, and will be able, to undertake; and this, I conceive, may be accomplished without trespassing upon any of the time necessary to his professional advancement, in seeking the acquisition of such branches of knowledge as in theory or practice may have little or no connexion with the objects of his military career; a service which, in the estimation of our country, is the most respected and most suited to an elevated soul, and into which, in one sense, he may be said to have already entered.

This I beg now to submit to your judgment; and should you favour me in reply with the communication of your own enlightened views on this matter, it will be conferring a great obligation on one who has the honour to be, with high consideration, &c.

2.

TO HER SON, PRINCE DASCHKAW.

At this period, my dear son, when your studies are sufficiently advanced to enable me with justice,

and without flattery, to say, that in many of their branches you have little more to do than to refresh your memory with reflecting on those treasures which it contains; and that, in all the rest, you already know enough to stimulate your appetite for more; I am sure, with the noble ambition which I delight to think has taken possession of you, that you will not fail to cultivate and to acquire a more profound knowledge of the sciences, to some acquaintance with which your education has early familiarized you. At present, indeed, when a new career opens upon you, or rather, I should say, a new method becomes necessary for perfecting what has been so well begun—when from a boyish you become a traveller student—I cannot refuse myself the gratification which, in fulfilling a mother's duty, I may be permitted to indulge, in representing to you the part in the new scenes before you which you will have to perform, the profit and honour to be derived from it, as well as the best and most certain means of obtaining these benefits to their utmost extent.

You are perhaps aware that, amongst the endless variety of travellers who traverse the great roads of Europe, there is not one in ten thousand who travels with the advantages which you possess. Fail not, then, to turn them to account; and for this purpose it will be especially necessary never to lose sight of the character, as a traveller, which you

have now to support. It is not, remember, to make one in a mere party of pleasure, or to get through some idle or unprofitable act of amusement; it is not that you may lose your time in never employing it, or to draw you away from the duties of society, which, in proper time, will demand your attention at home, that it is my wish at present to occupy you in foreign travel; but it is that you may seek and profit by the instruction it affords; that by reading, as it were, the manners, and characters, and institutions of other nations, thus brought before your eyes, you may learn justly to appreciate them, and to use the time still remaining to you between the boy and the man in such a manner as may give you a just title, in the latter character, to honourable distinction and well-merited applause.

As means to this end, in the plan which is proposed, one of the first things to be acquired is a habit of continued vigilance, to avail yourself of every source of information which presents itself in every situation, and under every circumstance, where you may happen to be placed; and in order to avoid an unnecessary waste of time in useless researches, and those trifling pursuits which are utterly worthless except in the most frivolous circles, it is of no small importance to select and seek only those objects, those materials of thought and study, which really deserve attention. Of these,

in determining their various, and more or less pressing, claims on your notice, much must depend on place. It is not, for example, in Ireland that you would acquire the best information respecting Spain, nor is it in Spain that you would derive the most curious and interesting particulars regarding Prussia. In a word, it is the place wherever you may happen to be on which the main current of your thoughts and observation must be turned; it is to the people of that particular place, to those of party or those of no party, should you fall in with such, to whom you have to listen. It is fit, indeed, everywhere and on every occasion, that you should carefully seek the conversation of well-informed men, not that you may talk yourself, but that you may ask and gain instruction from them. A traveller of sixteen or seventeen years old is not supposed to travel that he may shew off his talents. All the display that can be possibly wished for, and that he ought to exhibit, is a certain dawn or opening of promise, which should appear in the assiduity which he employs in collecting matter of remark and reflection; and thus it becomes sufficiently known that he travels for improvement. All other ambition on this head is mere impertinence, which would place a youth of your age in a very contemptible light, as a silly coxcomb, whose ill-judged pretensions would preclude every expectation or hope of future proficiency.

But to return to the plan and objects which

ought to engage your attention. The leading principle of the former, as I have already intimated, will be found to consist in seizing every opportunity of gaining knowledge, as it comes within your grasp, and in never forgetting that you are nothing more than a passing stranger in every country you visit. Hence you learn to let no occasion slip which in this way may be turned to profit. A traveller should be a spectator, with his eyes and ears continually open; for the scene once changed, the train of speculation which it called forth vanishes along with it.

The objects worthy of your attention are so many and various, that I will hint only at a few of the most interesting. These are, the nature and form of government; the laws, customs, influence, population, commerce; the physical circumstances of countries as relating to soil and climate, their foreign and domestic policy; the productions, religion, manners, resources, real and fictitious with regard to public credit, income, taxes; and the different conditions of the different classes of society. Inquiries relating to these are worthy the attention of a philosopher, and are such as no traveller ought to neglect, who would not pass over the several scenes of life, and all the sources of knowledge, like an automaton figure, insensible and incapable of all moral and intellectual improvement; and such, I trust, will occupy your thoughts and exercise your judgment in all the countries you traverse.

The education which you have received, as well as the progress you have made in your studies, which is not unknown, the advantages of rank, even your exterior appearance, manly beyond your years, are so many circumstances to produce a lively and sanguine expectation in your favour. The public will therefore never allow that same indulgence to you which they would be ready to extend to youths in general of your age, from a full persuasion that your understanding has been more matured, and consequently that you are more capable of judging and acting for yourself.

It is at the present moment, indeed, when, having passed the line of boyhood, and having entered with distinction upon the interesting but critical career of youth, that you are called upon to be more than ever jealous of the opinion of the public; by this I mean, jealous of your own actions, your words, your occupations, and your pursuits; for the more you advance in age, the greater becomes your own moral responsibility. The praise or blame of actions is then strictly your own, no longer shared by parents, friends, or tutors; and the more you are considered free from the restraint of their control and direction, the more pronounced will be the opinion of others on your own particular disposition and capacity. The blame which you are sure to incur, if you give occasion to it, will be proportionately severe, as your previous conduct and application as a child are contrasted with present failures;

when all the merit of the former will be attributed to those who exercised authority over you, and all the contempt which belongs to the latter will inevitably fall on yourself. Hence, I am sure, you will be led to perceive the delicacy and critical nature of your present position—a discovery which may tend to such a salutary diffidence in yourself as to put you on your guard against many inconsiderate actions, and save you from a thousand false steps.

This sort of diffidence is the usual accompaniment of modesty—a quality natural to, and peculiarly attractive in, youth, but which sets off even the greatest talents, and is becoming in every age as indicating a spirit of intellectual and moral sensibility, seldom wholly lost except through the consequences of an irregular life, or, more correctly speaking, of a long familiarity with baseness and vice. Modesty, indeed, when associated with genius and ability, may be said also to add such a charm to merit as will make great superiority pardoned, and force, as it were, admiration and love. The applause due to talents, which is often reluctantly paid, and which envy sometimes refuses, is then cordially granted. The absence of this quality, on the other hand, occasions many inconveniences; and among those, not to mention the impediment which self-sufficiency throws in the way of your own personal ardour in the pursuit of knowledge, it will seldom fail to disgust the most capable, and even the most willing of your acquaintance, with

the thankless task of throwing away their own store of light and information, on those who are too well satisfied with themselves to be sensible of its value.

In employing the period of your travels according to the manner which I have described, as I trust with sufficient clearness, you will be providing a never-failing and inestimable resource within yourself, independent of all exterior circumstances—a resource which, in the privacy of domestic life, in retirement, in old age and infirmity, will be found a personal and perpetual gain. You can hardly fail also to become an useful member of the society in which you live; for in comparing what you have observed in other countries with what you see at home, and in endeavouring to correct what you may thus find defective, and to propose and establish that which is conducive to the public good, you may render yourself a friend and benefactor to the community.

I believe I have little more to add at present than an earnest caution, that in your intercourse with people of other nations, you will carefully abstain from all injurious comparisons; for if comparisons between individuals, which must be offensive to one party or the other, are justly considered odious, comparisons between nation and nation are unpardonable, and the more so, because they are for the most part unjust. On this subject I will further add a parting word, that you should never be tempted to criticise too freely the manners and cus-

toms, and above all the religion, of nations. As to the two former, you will be right to conform with whatever does not oppose your cardinal principles; by this I mean, that you should never make the slightest sacrifice, or change, or compromise, where the maxims and interests of virtue are concerned; that on those points no circumstance, no condition, no persuasion, should ever prevail against a principle of duty. To yield may be to get rid of a passing importunity, or to give a momentary satisfaction to others; but it is sheer cowardice to concede a single jot injurious to principles founded on truth and virtue, whose claims and influence should be as obvious and acknowledged as the power of the sun at noon-day.

With regard to the religious opinions of those with whom you converse, it is fit they should be held sacred and respected, whatever they be. An attempt at refutation on these subjects, serious or ironical, leaves behind it a sensation bitter and offensive to that good opinion which every individual entertains of himself, never perhaps to be entirely forgotten.

At present, my dear son, I must come to a conclusion; and though to me it may appear that I have said all that is necessary without falling into the prosiness of pedantry, far from being hurt, should you find many reflections to be added, and some things to be corrected in this outline, I shall be truly happy to acknowledge you as my superior

in judgment; perfectly satisfied that you can never rival me in the sentiments of tender friendship with which I remain, ever,

Your affectionate mother.

3.

PRINCESS DASCHKAW TO THE DUCHESS OF BUCCLEUGH.*

Dublin.

It was not till yesterday that I had the pleasure of receiving the obliging letter which my highly-valued Duchess of Buccleugh was kind enough to write me, and I hasten immediately to thank her for it with all my heart, although I am just now completely at a loss where to direct this sheet. There are so many good reasons both for and against sending it to England, that I must either leave it to chance, or let some person or other settle the matter for me. I fear lest it should not find you in England; I fear that it might be kept waiting too long in Scotland; but above all, I fear the danger of your thinking me deficient in politeness towards you, or, what is much worse, in *feeling*. These thoughts have armed my hand with a pen, and are now guiding it over my paper. Some good genius will perhaps suddenly start up, and point out the proper method of sending it; so meanwhile I will scribble on.

* Elizabeth, daughter of George, Duke of Montague.

Your snuff, madam, is excellent; and I perceive that you have a design upon all my senses, since you have now so *firmly* taken hold of me by *the nose*, that if I were not convinced of your inability to lead any one into mischief, I should cry out for mercy!

Neither absence nor distance could detach from you any friend whom you wish to captivate, even if they were so inclined; but for myself I submit at once, and my affection makes me feel pleasure in my bonds.

What you tell me about Lady Frances* gives me great pleasure; but I am much concerned to hear how very slowly the recovery of the Marchioness of Lothian† is proceeding. She is a truly delightful woman, attractive and full of sterling worth at the same time, worthy of being understood and admired by you. With all my tenderness for my son, I could not form a wish which would tend more to his advantage than that he might one day obtain a wife who resembled her in everything. It must then indeed be his own fault if he were not happy.

He and his sister desire me to present their respects and affectionate compliments to you. They are both extremely sorry to learn how little hope you give us of seeing you in London this winter.

* Lady Frances Scott, sister of Henry, third Duke of Buccleugh, afterwards second wife of Archibald Lord, Douglas.

† Louisa Caroline D'Arcy, daughter of Robert, Earl of Holdernesse, great-grandaughter of Duke Schomberg, who died of the illness here referred to.

As for me, I assure you that I am made quite uneasy by it, and it was the only sentence in your letter that I could have wished to see expunged, even at the risk of shortening it. There are, however, so many links between London and Dalkeith, that I must confess to you, in spite of your strong determinations, and the power you have of repressing all outward show of feeling, I believe you to be so deeply affectionate that if the duke, your father, should be prevented from going to see *you*, you will be almost certain to come and see *him*. In short, I have experienced so many misfortunes, and endured so much privation, that in order to render life more tolerable, my system of philosophy (the infallibility of which I will not, however, vouch for) makes me believe and hope that whatever I *wish*, *will* come to pass. Allow me, then, my dear madam, to hope and believe that I shall once more have the delight of seeing you, and of assuring you of my lively esteem and attachment.

Mrs. Vesey is expected here. Besides the pleasure of seeing her, I shall be very glad that she should return to her native country, which, oppressed in every way, suffers particularly from the absence of all the rich people, who spend their incomes in England, whilst there is scarcely any money left to circulate here. I do not like my friends to give occasion to their own country-people to complain of them. Ah! madam, what a fine country would Ireland be, if those who hold the reins were not too

long-sighted to see the treasures lying under their very noses, whilst they are straining their eyes in search of what is too far off for them ever to obtain! But enough on this subject. Politics are not my *forte*. Yet England is so famous for optics, that some optician will surely discover a remedy for *long*-sightedness, as well as for *short*-sightedness, some day or other, and then all will be right.

I am not surprised at Lady Eleanor H.'s being so happy at going under your auspices to see a relative whom she must respect and love, and I shall feel for her when her little journey draws to a close. I am sure that you must have already wished for the same fate to befal my long epistle; but the only excuse I can offer for its length is one that I have read somewhere—viz., "*that I have not time to make it shorter.*" I am in a perpetual whirl, and if my health, which is much improved, did not render me a being sufficiently vulgar to escape all megrims and vapours, I believe my head would be completely turned.

Happily I shall soon leave this town to visit the Lake of Killarney, before I get tired enough to become a fine lady.

Adieu, madam; continue to honour me with the small portion of regard which I hope you have already bestowed upon me, because such regard is highly precious to me, and you would not wish to be ungrateful towards one who is so affectionately devoted to you as is your humble servant.

4.

DR. BLAIR TO THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

Edinburgh, August 5th, 1780.

Dr. Blair presents his most respectful compliments to Princess Daschkaw. As soon as the copies of the second volume of his sermons arrived in Edinburgh, he immediately directed one for her highness, and another for Mrs. Hamilton, with cards to them both, at Dublin. They were put up in one parcel, addressed to the princess, and given in charge to a lady who was then about to go from this to Dublin. By what he has heard very lately, Dr. Blair suspects that by that lady's being later in her passage than she proposed, the princess had left Ireland before the books arrived. He hopes the parcel would be transmitted to her to Bath, by some of her friends in Dublin, into whose hands it would naturally come, and may have reached her long before this. However, lest there should have been any mistake, he has written to Mr. Strahan, his publisher at London, and desired him to send, together with this, a copy of his book to her highness from the author.

He would be extremely sorry if, but for a moment, the princess were left under the least suspicion that Dr. Blair had neglected any opportunity, however small, of testifying his high regard for one for whom he entertains sentiments of the greatest and most real esteem, as well as the most profound respect;

to have had access to whose society, and to have enjoyed any degree of her friendship, he will always esteem a peculiar honour and felicity in his life.

It will give him great satisfaction if he can learn that the princess honours this volume with the same approbation as she did the former. He begs leave to offer his best respects to the prince and to Mad. Scherbinin; he hopes her highness will long continue to enjoy the greatest satisfaction in them both; and makes no doubt but in the future course of his life, the prince will go on to fulfil the high hopes which were entertained concerning him by all who had access to know him in Scotland.

5.

DAVID GARRICK TO THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

Mistley, in Essex, May 3rd, 1778.

MADAM,—I feel most sensibly the very great honour you have done me, and I have felt as sensibly the charming object of my gratitude. Yesterday, a most accomplished musician and an excellent composer did all the justice in his power to your highness's composition. The small audience was in raptures; the taste, harmony, and pathetic simplicity of the airs were felt from the heart. Indeed, madam, you were judged, not as a princess, but as a great artist. Not the least favour was shewn to your titles or rank, and though the musical jury sat

upon you with the most critical rigour, yet your acquittal was as unanimous as their approbation; in short, I fear what one of our own poets once prophesied will come to pass—

"Russia shall teach the arts to Britain's isle."

May your highness long continue to be an honour to your own nation, and the delight of ours; and may that pure taste for nature and simplicity get strength from your highness's example, and drive from our theatres the present vocal and instrumental music, which astonishes the ears without ever touching the heart. If with this public petition I may be allowed to throw in a private petition for myself, it is that I may enjoy a continuance of that honour which your great kindness has conferred upon, madam, your most obliged and most obedient servant,

DAVID GARRICK.

I should have acknowledged your highness's favour sooner had I not been from home.

6.

LADY ARABELLA DENNY TO THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

[The two following letters are from Lady Arabella Denny,* who is spoken of by the princess in

* This lady was the daughter of the first Earl of Kerry, (great grandfather of the present Marquis of Lansdown,) and married Arthur Denny, of Tralee Castle, Esq., by whom she was left a widow, without issue, August 8, 1742.

her memoir as one of the most interesting persons with whom she made acquaintance on her travels, and so distinguished for her many beneficent institutions as to have merited and received the thanks of the Irish parliament for these her public services.]

Peafield Cliff, July 14th, 1780.

My Dear Princess,

Pardon the freedom of the appellation; the pen traced the dictate which the heart offered without consulting the understanding. But I have been otherwise impertinent. I had as well confess all my trespasses on your highness since you left Ireland. I have been with you every day, and conversed with you by reflection; I have profited by your judgment of things, and improved my mind by your sentiments; in short, I have hardly left you one moment to yourself, till another mode of gratifying myself by your highness's favours to me offered, to satisfy my mind. Then Miss K. Fitzmaurice and I agreed that we would go and water the trees the Princess Daschkaw planted, (three of which are in a promising state.) My own hand, lame as it was, went to the watering-pot; and this was followed by our most sincere wishes that your highness might very very long enjoy every felicity that the best parent could hope for, from the two moral plants which had engaged so constantly your maternal and affectionate attention, whose blossoms promised the most salutary as well as the most pleasing fruits, and whose present appearance at-

tracts the regard of every observer—on these plants our kindest wishes wait. Your highness's letter of the 7th of June I have read over and over again. It gives me infinitely more credit than I deserve, for to justify all your kind expressions of partiality, I am painfully conscious how deficient I am in everything except in good intentions, and a heart which sets the highest value on your good opinion.

I cannot, my dear princess, express how much I am obliged to you for desiring our dear friend Mrs. Morgan to inform me so early of Lady Shelburne's safety, and the pleasing increase of Lord Shelburne's family. My fears for her were many; and your highness's tender and feeling heart was quick in relieving me. In a letter I received from Lord Fitzmaurice, I saw another instance of your highness's kindness, for he tells me you had desired him to write to me. The dear little man had been a punctual correspondent till of late; and some falling off I did expect, when many new amusements and avocations would engage his time: his disposition is excellent, and I enjoy comfort in thinking that the seeds of Christianity were the first sown in it.

The bell has rung for dinner, and I have hopes that I shall see our three friends of Leinster Street this evening, and I will commit this letter to Mrs. Morgan's kind and faithful hand, after we have passed half an hour with your highness on the cliff. We hope you are at Bath. If that water does your

health the service which the air of this place has done for Mrs. Tisdall's, we shall all rejoice at even your *absence* from us, as it will be (under God) the means of your continuing long a blessing to the multitude which your station in life, added to the many native and improved advantages you possess, must give you an influence over.

It is now the 18th; my short mornings and many avocations, and a weakness in my eyes, give me but little time for such a gratification as I now am indulging myself with at your highness's expense. But though I may not have it in my power to *express* my wishes for your perfect happiness, be assured they will most faithfully attend you, as no one can be more sensible how much they are due to your excelling worth than, my dear princess, your highness's most obliged and devoted servant,

ARABELLA DENNY.

Miss K. Fitzmaurice is all gratitude for the honour of being in your thoughts.

It is with pleasure I hear that your highness has recovered from your late indisposition, and that you did not suffer from the late unhappy proceedings in London. God in his mercy will, I trust, give us all his protecting and directing hand, and grace to do his will.

Peafield Cliff, December 23rd, 1780.

MOST EXCELLENT PRINCESS,

Your highness is not absent from my mind; your many virtues have impressed your image on my heart, and gratitude has written me your debtor on the same tablet, for your kind partiality to me.

Your highness's letter of the 9th of October, from Dover Street, has never been out of my pocket-book since I received it, except when, during a walk and sitting down to rest in the hermit's seat, I treat myself with taking it out to read, at which time I feel happy from having had the advantage and honour of knowing the Princess of Daschkaw, and suffer pangs for her absence. But the latter are softened by knowing how nobly you are engaged, and what good consequences will, with the blessing of God, proceed from your maternal pursuits. May you, my dear madam, experience what the scriptures assure us of, "That all things work together for good to those who love God;" and may your highness be very many years the happy witness of your most promising and agreeable offspring, enjoying the various advantages which their merit and rank entitle them to. Allow me to entreat your highness to make my best wishes acceptable to the Prince of Daschkaw and to Madame Scherbinin.

This season puts me in mind of the difference I

shall experience between this Christmas and the last, when the most gloomy days of the winter were often brightened by your presence at my little farm. The Christmas-pie is making, but alas! it will not have the honour the last had. Thus little things as well as great call to my mind the advantage I had, of conversing with one whose benevolent heart and improved mind must benefit all those who had the happiness of being admitted to any degree of intimacy with the Princess of Daschkaw. Our dear Mrs. Morgan gratifies me frequently with accounts of your highness, and I thank God they have been in general good; little colds are to be expected, but I trust that the bath has benefited your constitution. I leave to her to tell you of the part of the world that I have left behind me. My sister Shelburne, who was my friend as well as my brother's wife, died the 9th inst., at her second son's house, in Wales. Though her life for some months was but as a lamp going out, the total extinction of an old friend is shocking.

I will go to a subject that will afford your enlarged mind and benevolent heart more pleasure. The late king had granted to the present Lady Shelburne, when an infant, a pension on the Irish establishment. I received a letter from her, dated the 9th instant, to inform me that, considering the present state of Ireland and her own, her wish leads her to give it in public charity, preferable to any other mode open at present of returning it to the

public; and (in phrases very flattering to me) desiring me to distribute it, and adding that she only waited for my consent to do so, to direct her agent to pay it to my order. I am this moment engaging Dean Bayley to furnish me with a list of all the public charities in Dublin that are supported by voluntary contributions, with observations on them; I also mean to mention those capital articles that by encouragement might benefit the kingdom; as it is due to her goodness to have her choice of directing it to *that* which would give her most pleasure to aid. I do not know what the pension is; I suppose it cannot be one that will do a great deal, but it will begin a fine work at least. These are the acts which strew the paths through life with real pleasures, and gild that portal through which we must all pass, from this short life to that which will have no end.

I have often lamented that I did not entreat your highness to give me that paper which you had written on the state of Ireland, and was so good to read to me; it was the picture I wished to have of the Princess of Daschkaw, and it is what I wish you would indulge me with; it was not very large; a letter might convey it. Gratify the wishes of her who will always respect and love you, dear madam, as your highness's most obliged, devoted, and respectful humble servant,

ARABELLA DENNY.

It is freezing so hard that I can hardly hold my

pen. Miss K. Fitzmaurice, sensible of the honour of your highness's notice of her, begs leave to be among the most respectful of your servants.

[It will be remembered that, in the course of the princess's memoir, after her appointment to the directorship of the Imperial Academy of Arts and Sciences, a new establishment was founded by the empress, of a purely national character, for the purpose of perfecting the Russian language, and for the advancement of Russian literature.

Princess Daschkaw was appointed to preside over this academy also; and the following was her inaugural speech, delivered in Russ.]

7.

DISCOURSE DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE IMPERIAL RUSSIAN ACADEMY BY ITS PRESIDENT THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

GENTLEMEN,—A new instance of the solicitude of our august empress for the instruction of her subjects has this day assembled us together. That genius which has already diffused so many benefits over Russia has now given a proof of its protective energy in behalf of the Russian language, the parent and source of so many others. You will surely appreciate, gentlemen, the gift which our great sovereign has conferred on our country and on this

assembly. The riches and copiousness of our language to you are well known. They are such as will render justice to the varied treasures of antiquity. Transposed into our tongue, the nervous eloquence of Cicero, the measured grandeur of Virgil, the attractive sweetness of Demosthenes, the easy eloquence of Ovid, and the thundering flashes of the lyre of Pindar, will lose nothing of their respective beauties. Our mother tongue unites not only these advantages, gentlemen, but even in all the subtleties of philosophy, in their affinities and oppositions, it furnishes appropriate expressions, and terms the most applicable and descriptive. But with such resources we have to lament the want of determinate rules—rules for the inflexions of words, as well as an authorized definition and limitation of their meaning. Hence have arisen those varieties of construction, those improprieties of imitation and foreign idiom, which have hitherto disfigured and depressed our language.

The object of the establishment of the Imperial Russian Academy is to render it perfect, to raise it to a standard of elevation suitable to the glorious age of Catherine II. This, gentlemen, must be the end and aim of the labours of a society founded and supported by her gracious protection. The different memorials of antiquity spread over the vast surface of the Russian empire, our numerous chronicles, those precious records of the great actions of our ancestors, of which few of the nations

of Europe now existing can boast an equal number, present a vast field for our exertions, upon which we are led to advance under the guidance of the enlightened genius of our august protectress. The high deeds of our princes, the exploits of the past and the present ever-memorable age, present an almost boundless range of subjects worthy of our labour.

But, gentlemen, the first fruits of our endeavours, the first offering to be laid at the feet of our immortal sovereign, is a grammar of our language, exact and methodical, and a rich and copious dictionary. Allow me to flatter myself, gentlemen, that you will not hesitate to give me credit for the sentiments with which I am penetrated, in the honour of being associated with you by my generous sovereign, to concur in the good of an establishment so useful to our country. Believe me, gentlemen, that the zeal which enkindles in my heart the love of that country will never be extinguished, and that in everything which may tend to render our society flourishing and successful, I shall endeavour to supply, by indefatigable application, the deficiency of other qualifications of which I am most sensible.

I deem it an indispensable duty, on this first occasion of our meeting, to place before you a sketch which I have had the honour of submitting to the consideration of her majesty, in order that it may have the benefit of your remarks,

and the addition of whatever may be considered further necessary to establish the basis of our constitution. Any imperfections which here present themselves will surely not escape your penetration; but there are two considerations which solicit your indulgence. The first is, that I have contracted the habit of exposing to our incomparable sovereign my ideas, however undigested and unarranged they may be, with entire confidence and sincerity, which she is pleased to receive with kindness, from a persuasion of the purity of my intentions. The other, that it never entered my contemplation, and I trust such a vain idea never can, that I, though placed at the head of this Academy, should be capable, in my own person, of upholding the labours and glory of such an institution. It is on your aid, gentlemen, that I count, and the confidence which I place in it is the strongest proof I can give of my profound esteem for you.

[From the princess's usual neglect of dates, we are left to collect as we can, from the subject of her letters, the period when they were written. In the following case, however, the omission is of little importance. The letter is addressed to her most intimate friend Mrs. Hamilton, sister to Dr. Ryder, Archbishop of Tuam, whom the princess frequently met in the course of her travels, and who once went from Ireland to pay the princess a visit at Troitskoe,

in the neighbourhood of Moscow. They were in constant correspondence for many years. The candour and freedom with which, in this letter, the princess gives her own view of herself, in contrast with the descriptions supposed to be furnished by others, are very characteristic.]

8.

LETTER TO MRS. HAMILTON.

WHAT a task, my dear friend, have you imposed on me! You insist that I should describe the different portraits which have been made of me, and that I should add one from my own pencil. I have known, I assure you, more than twenty, which people have been at the trouble of taking; and if nineteen were flattering, and far above any pretensions of your friend, there were a few, from their extreme hideousness, as certainly below them.

That I shall speak candidly of myself, without concealing either virtues or failings, you express your conviction; but it is not candour or sincerity alone on these points that I shall find embarrassing. Think only that in what concerns my poor individual self there are matters involved touching great personages and great events.

However, it shall be my business to obey; and to begin, there is one portrait, let me observe, traced, as is pretended, by the hand of her majesty, who, in writing to the king of Poland after her accession to the throne, and speaking of that event,

assures him that I had very little to do with it, and was in fact no better than an ambitious simpleton. Now I do not believe a word of this story; besides, I can never be led to imagine that so superior a being as the empress could have spoken thus of a poor individual, her subject, so soon after that very individual had testified a devotion to her without limit, and had risked the loss of life on the scaffold in her service. Here, then, is one of the twenty portraits which I have the honour of presenting to you.

It has also been said that her majesty represented me to the Emperor of Germany as a most *capricious* person. I am as little disposed to believe this of the empress as what I have just repeated, knowing me as she did, and knowing that nothing could be more opposite to my real character. It would indeed be superfluous to shew—what almost every action of my life tends to prove—that one who for many years had borne with constancy not only the assaults of calumny, but all the difficulties of poverty, could not be governed by caprice. Such as are acquainted with me have no need to be informed, that without complaining of, or yielding to, the powerful enemies which I had about the person of my sovereign, I have kept an uniform, undeviating course, which can hardly be supposed to argue versatility in the mind or character.

But to proceed on the task before me, and finish it, if possible, before disgust or ennui cut it short,

it will be as well to divide my paper into two columns, in one of which shall be written what others have said of me, and in the other what I think of myself.

Sense and a portion of genius have been pretty generally attributed to me.

I do not think myself absolutely deficient in the former, but to the latter I have not the smallest pretension, unless it might be in respect to music; for, in spite of the refusals I experienced to allow me a master, vocal or instrumental, I nevertheless acquired such a tact for music, that I could feel and judge its beauties almost as much as if I were really a proficient in the art. My heart has, indeed, frequently warmed my imagination, although the power of imagination has never had the same effect on my heart.

Certain persons have considered me learned, and represented me as such.

Not only have I invariably rejected such a claim, but I have frequently repeated to those who would listen to me, that it was impossible I should be so, unless learning came by inspiration. My education, which, in the time of my youth, was thought the best of all possible educations, was confined to the German, French, and

Italian languages, history, geography, arithmetic, the dogmas of the Greek church, drawing, and dancing. This was its full extent. I had a very lively desire, it is true, for instruction, and there was scarcely a book which fell in my way that I did not devour. At thirteen years old, having a little more liberty than before,—for I then ceased to have a governess,—I spent all my pocket-money in the purchase of books; but reading of this desultory nature, without selection or method, could scarcely make me learned. At fifteen, I fell in love with him who became my husband. Then followed marriage, children, sicknesses, and afterwards sorrows; circumstances, it will be admitted, most unfavourable to the acquisition of those literary attainments I so much coveted.

Some have painted me as obstinately attached to my own opinions,

I have been a slave, a voluntary one, it is most true, to every will of my husband, as I was to that of my mother-in-law, and afterwards to that of Mlle. Kamensky, as well

and inordinately vain.

as of other friends, as often as it was their pleasure to make me so.

With regard to vanity, I believe it is none to say that I never could flatter myself that I possessed the power of pleasing. It was this diffidence, this distrust of myself, constraining as it were, if not my heart, at least my countenance, which produced a species of awkwardness in my manner too readily interpreted, by ill-natured observers, into an expression of haughtiness or ill humour.

Such was the effect of the timidity with which I was usually overcome amidst a great circle, so as to produce the very consequence I dreaded—a misapprehension of whatever I said or did. The retired life I led added to this sort of embarrassment; and many has been the time when my friends have remarked the nervous paroxysms into which I have been thrown by the attention of the company being turned upon me, when making the most trifling sort of exhibition, were it even in a dance

or a song, though in fact I had the power of acquitting myself in either very decently.

Ambition has been made by others my ruling passion; and to vanity has been attributed the repugnance which I have shewn to a second marriage.

The only ambition which ever possessed my heart was that of maintaining the undivided love of my husband. After his death a violent illness, occasioned by despair at his loss, deadened in me every other sentiment but that of profound sorrow.

The state of poverty, if I may so speak, in which my children and I then found ourselves, led me to devote all my time, to sacrifice every taste, and to make every exertion, for the benefit of their health, far as it was from strong, and for the advancement of their education; and further, to pay my husband's debts, without lessening the funds which were to form their patrimony. For this purpose it became necessary to lower the style of living and dress suitable to my rank, and to the changed position in my circumstances; and so far, indeed, was I from encouraging sentiments favourable to a new engagement, which might render my

children doubly orphans, that I assumed the mask of insensibility and coldness, whilst my heart confessed the painful void which the lost object of its warmest affection had too sensibly occasioned.

I have been represented also as violent, impetuous, and covetous.

The grand canvas for these several portraits, stretched and prepared for the purpose, was presented to the public immediately after the event of the empress's accession to the throne; and to judge of these productions, it should not be lost sight of that I was then but eighteen years old; and in my estimate of human affairs and motives it should further not be forgotten that I laboured under two grievous disabilities—first, a total want of experience; and, secondly, a habit of judging every creature according to my own proper feelings, believing the whole human race infinitely better than what it is in reality—an error to which I am still too prone, in spite of many rude and convincing proofs to the contrary.

Remember too that, next to my husband, I looked up to and adored the empress almost as a

second divinity — that the advancement of her glory to the highest degree of lustre, with which I conceived the happiness of my country to be intimately and inseparably connected, was my fondest and most ardent desire; and then you can understand that, with a sensibility on this subject most extreme, and a notion (shall I confess it?) that I was a principal instrument in the revolution, and that her glory was in some measure my own, the very idea of any stain which could impair its lustre was enough to excite an irritation, a fever of the mind, not the effect of a violent, impetuous temper, but of an enthusiastic nature easily wrought upon, but of which few would penetrate the motive. Think also of those who surrounded the empress; remember that they became my enemies from the first days of her accession to the throne; that these people were all powerful; and then it will be far from difficult to perceive how and wherefore artists were never wanting to apply their pencils and their palettes to the disfiguring of your friend, and why the colouring of their designs was so little in harmony, and consistent with the truth.

That I am not chargeable with violence of character, my acquaintance in general, and (what is better) my servants, I am sure, would be found to testify, in warmly repelling the assertion. I know but two subjects which could have stirred up the small portion of bile which nature had mingled in my composition; the infidelity of my husband

would have been one, and whatever could tarnish the fame of my sovereign, Catherine the Second, the other.

As to avarice, which forms one of the features here referred to, it is a vice which can find its place only in the basest mind and narrowest heart. Of this I will only observe, that I rendered pecuniary assistance to my relations much beyond what my means could fairly justify; and it was not till after I had given up to my son the property of his father, with the reservation of what was due to myself, and after the year 1782, when the empress presented me with an estate at Mohiloff, that I could call myself independent, or possessed of an income strictly my own, amounting to one hundred pounds sterling.

Adieu: pardon my calumniators, and join with me in either pitying or despising them.

LETTERS OF DIDEROT

AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS

TO

THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

LETTERS OF DIDEROT

AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS

TO

THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

To the copy of these letters, of which the following is a translation, there is prefixed a note by the celebrated Count Rastapchine, who was Governor of Moscow during the French invasion, and who is supposed to have directed the heroic act, the burning of that city, which led to the retreat and destruction of the hostile army, and in its consequences to the liberation of Europe. The princess, who entertained a great esteem for this distinguished person, had lent him Diderot's letters, with permission to have them copied; and it was on the occasion of his returning them that this expression of his sentiments in favour of the writer was conveyed, in order, perhaps, to introduce the well-turned compliment to the princess with which the note concludes. However exaggerated the merits of this celebrated writer and philosopher may be thus made to appear, there is no reason whatever to suppose

the opinion an insincere one. It corresponds, indeed, in a great measure with that of the princess herself, who always spoke of Diderot, not only with high admiration, but in terms of very affectionate regard.

The note alluded to, rendered into English, is as follows:—

"None who read, and comprehend what they read, can be strangers to the genius of Diderot, though many may be unacquainted with his heart. Every one is agreed that he was a great man; but few are aware that he was one of the best men of his age. His writings have gained him renown, persecution, and envy; but his heart found a recompence in the affection of his friends. A sublime philosopher; a powerful orator; a profound observer; Nature was his passion; his ardent soul poured itself forth before the grand works of the Eternal. Hence the motive of his homage to the Princess Daschkaw.

"COUNT RASTAPCHINE."

1.

DIDEROT TO THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

Paris, April 3, 1771.

MADAM,—Heaven knows the reproaches you must have made me. "He not only promised to write to me," I hear you exclaim, "but appeared even

jealous of a place in my recollection; and three whole months have passed without a single line from his pen." And Mlle. Kamensky, too, who might have been tempted to have offered a word in my defence, but for appearances, which were so strong against me—may not she have relaxed in the good opinion she had entertained of my nation, and charged to its account a fault of which I alone am guilty? If, indeed, the philosopher Diderot is found inconstant, light, prodigal of promises made as it would seem only to be broken, what, she will say, is the opinion to be formed of others? This is a common sophism, be it observed, of those who have been deceived in love or in friendship. If such an one has deceived us, there is no further hope of friends; if such an one has played us false, adieu to lovers. Well, madam, in spite of my silence I am nevertheless the very same; always filled with devotion and respect for you, but always, alas! the most lazy of men. I have dealt with you, princess, exactly as I have dealt with my father, my mother, my brother, my sister, all of whom I love with all my soul, and to whom I have never communicated a sign of my existence except in those circumstances wherein I have had the good fortune to be of use to them. Only contrive, madam, how I can be in any way serviceable to you, and you shall then discover the scrupulous exactness of which I am capable.

I might, however, offer some excuse, independent of the good or evil bent of my disposition. We have,

in truth, all been suffering from illness, both father, mother, and infant. For about two months past, we have every morning plunged in a warm bath this infant, for whom my tenderness is almost unbounded. I dare speak of these afflictions to you, who have taught me by your kindness, that what deeply interests me is not wholly indifferent to yourself.

M. Maurice has just informed me that you have done me the honour to write to me. I declare to you on my honour, princess, that not a letter from you has ever reached me.

If I were sure that what I am now writing would not fall into other hands than those for which it is destined, I could possibly amuse and interest you with an account of our public affairs. I might tell you that an advocate-general has been driving away the Jesuits from Britanny. These stirring and vindictive men gain over to their side the governor of the province; this governor is a great man, violent, determined, and despotic; this great man throws the advocate-general into prison; the parliament of the province vindicates its magistrate, and off goes the affair at once to the parliament of the capital; the parliament of the capital vows vengeance on the representative of the court; and the court with equal warmth supports its representative. During these pleasant involvements, the *master** takes to

* The king.

himself a mistress; the first minister raises a magistrate to the place of chancellor; this chancellor immediately sets to work to overthrow the minister, and succeeds. The said chancellor takes up the cause of the representative of the court; and as he sees no other means to save his protégé from the penalty of the laws, than by an overthrow of the parliament of the capital, he submits an edict to the said parliament which he is pretty sure will be rejected. The edict is accordingly rejected, and the parliament of the capital is dissolved; the offices of the magistrates who composed it are annulled; and what formed the district of this parliament is now divided into a certain number of little courts of judicature.

This event has raised a great outcry amongst all orders of the state. The princes remonstrate, the other tribunals remonstrate, the whole aristocracy remonstrates; in fact, there is no end to remonstrances. Heads become heated; this heat is gradually expanding; principles of liberty and independence, which formerly might have lurked in the brains of a small number of people who think, are now establishing themselves, and becoming openly avowed.

Each age has its characteristic spirit. The spirit of ours appears to be that of liberty. The first attack has been fierce and unmeasured against superstition. When men have once dared in any

way to assault the barrier of religion, the most formidable which exists and the most respected, it is impossible to stop there. If once brought to turn their proud looks against the majesty of Heaven, they will assuredly the next moment be directed against earthly sovereignty. The cable which fetters and restrains mankind is formed of two cords, one of which cannot give way without a rupture of the other. Here, then, is our present position; and who can say to what it will lead? If the court retraces its steps, its antagonists will learn to estimate their strength; and this cannot occur without consequences of importance. We are arrived at a crisis which will terminate in slavery, or in liberty; if in slavery, such a slavery as exists in Morocco or Constantinople. If all the parliaments be dissolved, and France inundated with little tribunals, composed of magistrates without conscience as without power, and removable at the first signal of their master, every privilege of the different estates forming a corrective principle, which preserves monarchy from degenerating into despotism, is gone. If the movement which now makes the constitution totter had been executed before the expulsion of the Jesuits, the affair could have been ended; all the tribunals of the magistracy would have been filled in the twinkling of an eye with their affiliated members and adherents, and we should have sunk under a species of theo-

cracy; whence in less than a century we must have retrograded into a state of barbarism the most absolute. To write, would be no longer permitted; we should not even dare to think; and very soon it would be as impossible to read; for authors, books, and readers, would be alike proscribed.

There are certain possibilities beyond the reach of our powers of divination. It is the circumstance itself which develops them. For my own part, ideas which I am now capable of entertaining, I protest, at another time I could have never conceived. It is a thousand times more easy, I am persuaded, for an enlightened people to be thrown back to barbarism, than for a barbarous people to advance a single step towards civilization. It would seem, indeed, that everything, both good and evil, has its maturity. When the good reaches its point of ripeness, it begins to sink into evil; when the evil becomes ripe, it rises into good. But really, princess, I know not why I should talk to you on subjects like these, which you will hear discussed around you with more freedom and more force. Indeed, I have never forgotten the promise I made to you. I entreat Mlle. Kamensky to accept the expression of my respect. That, madam, which I offer to you, is as sincere as it is profound.

2.

Petersburg, December 24th, N.S.

MADAM,—Nothing can be more true. I am really at Petersburg. I am come eight or nine hundred leagues at sixty years of age, far from my wife, my daughter, my relations, my friends, and my acquaintance, to render homage to a great sovereign, my benefactress! What will you say of me? That I have done well? Your answer, I am sure, will be that of a woman who possesses soul, sensibility, and, above all, a pretty large dose of that quality without which one need never hope to exceed mediocrity in anything, and that is called *enthusiasm*. Nevertheless, I have twice risked my life in the journey; although in separating from those we love, and those who love us, life does not count for much! Perhaps in returning, I shall not be able to boast of the same intrepidity.

I have had the honour of approaching her imperial majesty as often as I could have desired; much oftener, indeed, than I could have dared to hope. I have found her such as you have pictured her to me in Paris; one who possesses the soul of Brutus, with all the fascinations of Cleopatra. Great as she is on a throne, as an individual, her attractions would have turned the heads of thousands. No one understands the art of setting people at their ease as she does. Pardon me, madam, I am forgetting how much I have experienced your talent also in that respect. Where there is nothing, abso-

lutely nothing, or where there is something, it never fails to pass for something with the empress, as with yourself. You will remember, without doubt, with how much freedom you permitted me to speak to you in the *Rue de Grenville*. I enjoy that very same liberty in the palace of her imperial majesty.* I am allowed to say everything which passes through my head; wise, perhaps, when I am thinking myself foolish, and perhaps very foolish when I am thinking myself wise. Ideas which are transplanted from Paris to Petersburg assume, it is certain, a very different colour.

Your name often presented itself in our conversation; and if to me it was a pleasure to pronounce it, it was always heard, I may as truly say, with satisfaction. Shall I nevertheless confess the

* It is to this occasion of Diderot's visit to Petersburg, and to the opportunities he enjoyed of unrestrained conversations with the empress, that the Count de Ségur refers when he says, that Catherine was much pleased with the vivacity and originality of his genius, as well as with his vehement and rapid eloquence. It nevertheless appears, from the following passage of M. de Ségur's work, that this sagacious sovereign was not led away by any exalted opinion of the wisdom of his philosophy:—

" Je m'entretins long-temps et souvent avec lui, me disait Catherine, mais avec plus de curiosité que de profit. Si je l'avois cru, tout auroit été bouleversé dans mon empire; legislation, administration, politique, finances, j'aurois tout renversé pour y substituer d'impraticables théories.

" Cependant, comme je l'écoutais plusque je ne parlais, un témoin qui serait survenu nous auroit pris tous deux, lui pour un sévère pédagogue, et moi pour son humble écolière. Probablement il le crut lui-même, car, au bout de quelque temps, voyant qu'il ne s'opérait dans mon gouvernement aucune des

truth? Three delicious hours enjoyed every third day would have left abundance of spare time on my hands, had not study, and the alternations of health and indisposition, saved me from *ennui*. I must always either employ my thoughts, or be in a state of suffering; and to suffer I find less disagreeable than to yawn.

But let me ask, madam, what are you doing? And Mlle. Kamensky—she, I trust, is equally dear to you, and that you are equally the cherished object of her affection. If the same tender sentiment as formerly unites you, may I not call you happy? Your children, too, do they add to your blessings? Do they answer to your maternal cares? Do they occupy and fill your time? Will they be one day worthy of you?

grandes innovations qu'il m'avait conseillées, il m'en montra sa surprise avec une sorte de fierté mécontente.

" Alors, lui parlant franchement, je lui dis : *Monsieur Diderot, j'ai entendu avec le plus grand plaisir tout ce que votre brillant esprit vous a inspiré ; mais avec tous vos grands principes, que je comprends tres bien, on ferait de beaux livres, et de mauvaise besogne. Vous oubliez dans tous vos plans de réforme la difference de nos deux positions : vous, vous ne travaillez que sur le papier, qui souffre tout : il est tout uni, souple, et n'oppose d'obstacle ni à votre imagination ni à votre plume ; tandis que moi, pauvre impératrice, je travaille sur la peau humaine, qui est bien autrement irritable et chatouilleuse.*"

" Je suis persuadée, que dès-lors il me prit en pitié, me regardant comme un esprit étroit et vulgaire. Dès ce moment, il ne me parla plus que de littérature ; et la politique disparut de nos entretiens."—*Memoires, &c. par M. le Comte de Ségur*, tom. iii. pp. 34, 35.

Why do you not come and inform yourself of these things with your own eyes? I hear you answer. That was indeed my intention; but a miserable machine, out of joint with the fatigue of the journey, and shrunk with cold under a pelisse of fifty pounds weight—fretting, writhing, shivering, a positive object of compassion—tottering, shrivelled, and reduced to only half its dimensions—warns me most imperiously and most dolorously that such a thing is impossible. Pity me, then, madam, but do not scold me. Receive the expression of my perfect respect, and present the same to Mlle. Kamensky. Let me preserve your esteem, since you have had the kindness to bestow it on me. If, notwithstanding the disdain with which you treat my country, (and that I ought in policy to pardon, from the consolation it affords my vanity in having anything to pardon in those beings whom perfection has elevated above the common sphere)—if you will deign to honour me with some of your commissions, they shall be most punctually executed.

Falconet, his *elève*, and myself, talk of you from time to time; and were you within hearing, you would not, I think, be angry with us. It is among such that one speaks the truth, when in other places one is silent. Let me make an exception, however, in favour of the cabinet of her imperial majesty. Falsehood, I positively assure you, finds no place in that quarter when the philosopher is there.

The bearer of this letter you will find an honest man, and one with whom you may converse safely and at your ease. His veneration for you, founded on a just estimate of your character, is perfectly sincere. Give me credit for all I say of him, and do not hesitate to believe all that he will say of me; and then, madam, permit me to take your hand and most cordially to salute it.

If I should ask you a favour, may I not be quite sure that you will have great pleasure in granting it? I entreat you, then, to join your solicitations to those of M. de Narishkin in order to obtain from a certain M. de Demidoff (whose opinion, by the bye, of the French people is not much more flattering than your own, but who is pleased to make an exception in my favour, as politeness always spares the person immediately addressed) some specimens of natural history in his possession, fossils, minerals, shells, &c. Although somewhat bilious and unsocial, this M. de Demidoff is a very worthy sort of man, and one who will not require to be much pressed on a point where he has given a promise, especially as he is much indebted to the obliging reception which he received from M. D'Aubertin at the Cabinet of Natural History. Pray request, also, that the specimens of which he makes me a present should be ticketed and numbered.

I am doing all that is in my power to gain instruction here; and there are two ways of ob-

taining it; one is, always to ask, when you are ignorant, and to ask of people who can inform you, for thus you acquire the knowledge of some truth; the other is, to blunder out any folly which has taken possession of your brain; for once fairly rid of it, you shut the door and prevent its return for ever. I am talking, you see, as if I really were at your side, just as I used to do, whilst you were standing with your elbow resting on the chimney-piece, and examining my countenance to discover whether, or how far, I was in earnest. If you were then able to read all the respect, all the devotion, all the esteem, with which you inspired me, you have to seek no further; nothing, madam, is changed; the same sentiments continue legible, and can never be effaced. I am, with the most profound respect, madam, your very humble and very obedient servant, DIDEROT.

P.S.—I send along with this letter a little catalogue of the principal specimens which I am anxious to possess; if M. de Demidoff should be tempted to extend his kindness beyond this, there is not the least occasion to check it. Apropos, you, madam, are a writer of verses; I can write them also; but yours are always delightful, mine only sometimes. You can harmonize them for the voice, and your vocal music is always tender, varied, touching, I may say, even voluptuous. For my part, I can feel all this merit, but I do not possess it. How

happy you are, princess, to be a genuine lover of music. It is the most powerful of the *beaux arts*. Its influence, like that of love, is infinitely to be valued for the pleasure which it gives, and perhaps still more for the consolations which it affords. A certain Madame de Borosdin, who sings with much taste, and a very pretty voice, has promised me some national songs; but I fear she is too dissipated, too much admired, too fond perhaps of admiration, too indolent, in fact, to think of keeping her word. I do not count, madam, amongst these promises certain airs of yours, popular ones, as well as others of the *salon*, with the Russian words written below, and with your own accompanying graces, noted as much as the thing permits, without which, at the distance of nine hundred leagues, there would be difficulty in making all their beauty felt. How much I am abusing your kindness!

3.

Petersburg, January 23rd, 1774.

MADAM,—I do not hesitate to accept all the affectionate, handsome, complimentary, and agreeable things which you have had the kindness to address to me, nor am I indeed too anxious to inquire whether they are merited or not; but there is a certain organ under the left breast which assures me that you will never have occasion to retract such expressions. There are only three things in this

world which can really render men contemptible—an overweening love of riches, of honours, and of life. As to myself, there are so many things that I can easily dispense with, that to look with contempt on riches does not cost me an effort. A morsel of bread, no matter whether black or white, a jug of clear water, some books, a friend, and at intervals the charms of a little female intercourse; this, with a tranquil conscience, is all I want. Honours which bring along with them no duties are mere playthings, thrown out for the amusement of grown-up children. The age has now passed with me when such things might have pleased; though, in truth, on a retrospect of the past, I do not remember the moment when to me they had much attraction. When the functions they impose are important, the case is altered. Ah, madam, what a glorious fellow is that most idolized of saints, *Sacro-santo Far Niente*. Once a decided votary at this shrine, and your satisfaction is complete; for who can be otherwise than pleased who does nothing but what he pleases. You may then without reproach take an additional hour or two of sleep, for no one's happiness is compromised by such an indulgence. And as to life, I vow to you I uld as easily part with mine as I could pour out a glass of champagne, were it for no other reason than to stop the mouth of any one who would dare to contradict such an assertion. In the meantime, whether I court a *finale* to this weary and vapid farce which men call life, or patiently await

its conclusion, consider me, madam, always in the number of your most devoted servants.

I am now on the point of my departure from Petersburg. If my services at Paris can be of the slightest use, and you scruple to employ them, the esteem with which you honour me I can conceive only as an expression of the lips, with which the heart has nothing to do; and in that case, I am sorry for both one and the other. But figure to yourself how I am circumstanced at this moment. Here is an idle fellow of a son come from Paris to Petersburg, and is now dragging me back towards a wife, who will put me into a frenzy as soon as I approach her; to some plagues of children, who will give me enough to do to set to rights all their follies; towards friends, who, ten to one, for a single day's pleasure will give me a month of pain; and towards acquaintance, who will sing, laugh, and shout with joy, as if my presence, with which they can wonderfully well dispense, were essential to their enjoyment; towards my countrymen, of whom one half go to bed distracted with their ruin, and the other half in despair unless they rise to seek it. Why, then, not remain where you are so well off as at present? you will naturally say; or why not come to Moscow, where I can offer you repose, that sort of society where you may chat in confidence and at your ease, your beloved idol also, the *Sacro-santo Far Niente*, and happiness cut and carved exactly to your own fan-

tasy? It is, madam, because I am a fool, and that your wisdom, mine, and the wisdom of all the world, consists in feeling the inanity of besetting circumstances, in raving at them, and still in becoming their dupe.

Adieu, madam; it is so delightful to fancy myself an object of your regard that I am resolved to believe it is so. I have had the honour of seeing the count, your brother, and am now waiting for him, that we may talk over one of those commissions of yours which is well worth consideration. That it shall be executed you may be certain; but I cannot pronounce with what success.

I entreat you to favour the bearer of this letter with as many leisure moments as you can spare him. His name is Crillon, and he is not unworthy of the name he bears. It was his ancestor of whom Henry the Fourth, his sovereign and friend, was heard to say, "There is the bravest man of all my kingdom." He is going to Moscow to see the Princess Daschkaw, and will avail himself of the opportunity it offers of seeing Moscow. He has conceived the same favourable opinion of me which you have done me the honour to express, and nothing can so much delight him as to hear my praises from you. Gratify him, princess, to the utmost. He will believe all you say, and then return so full of yours as to render back to me a hundredfold the same sort of satisfaction which you will thus be capable of affording him. I need not say a word of the enlightened

character and understanding of the Count de Crillon. On these points you will very soon be able to form your own opinion—one which will do him equal justice with mine, but certainly much more honour. In time you would be led to love and esteem him more than the person who recommends him to your notice. I can only hope, therefore, that he will not stay long enough to give you the opportunity. I am, madam, with profound respect, your most humble and most obedient servant,

DIDEROT.

PORTRAITURE

OF

THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW

BY DIDEROT.

The Princess Daschkaw has spent a fortnight here, during which I have been with her four times, from about five o'clock in the afternoon till midnight. I have had the honour of dining and supping with her, and am almost the only Frenchman whose visits she has accepted.

She is Russian *intus et in cute*, full of admiration for the empress, of whom she always speaks with profound respect and veneration. Her taste for the English nation is so pronounced, that I fear her partiality for this anti-monarchical people may somewhat indispose her to render justice to our own. Not so Mlle. Kamensky, her friend, and companion of her travels, who loves France and the French people, and praises all our fine things with a frankness not quite responsive to the feelings of the princess.

Although it was the beginning of November,

Madame Daschkaw went out every morning about nine o'clock, and never returned to her house till the close of the day for dinner. All this time was employed in informing herself of everything which the eyes could take in, of pictures, statues, buildings, manufactures. In the evening I went to chat with her on subjects which the eyes could not discern, and with which she could only be fully acquainted by a long residence,—laws, customs, government, finance, politics, manners, arts, sciences, literature: of these I told her all I knew.

With regard to her expectations from the empress, her object, I found, was neither grandeur nor riches; it was simply to preserve the esteem of her sovereign, which she thought that she merited, and her friendship, which she flattered herself that she possessed. We spoke but for a moment of the revolution; and as far as any merit was concerned in producing that event, she disclaimed every pretension to it, both on her own part and on that of others. It was brought about, she said, by an imperceptible clue, which she and all had unconsciously followed; and if there was any one who could be named as giving a positive impulse to this adventure, it would be no other than Peter the Third himself, through his extravagances, his vices, his incapacity, and the scorn and disgust which his low-lived and scandalous habits had excited throughout the nation. Every one was hurried on towards the same end by the general voice; and so

little was there of concert in the proceeding, that the affair was very far advanced before she, or the empress, or any other person, had any suspicion of the result which was at hand. Three hours before the revolution, she declared it was as little contemplated as if it was distant as many years. There had never been any question, it seemed, of making Catherine empress. The acclamation which placed her on the throne was commenced by four officers of the guards, who afterwards were exiled, and remain so still. The cause of their disgrace I will speak of presently. The princess protested to me that there was not a man in Russia, even amongst the peasants, who believed that Catherine was an accomplice in the death of Peter the Third; although in the empire, as well as throughout Europe, every one was convinced that his death was a violent one.

After the revolution, there were many who had not the slightest share in it, who sought to make a merit of it in the eyes of the empress; amongst others, a General Betskoy, who, a few days after her accession to the throne, presented himself before the sovereign, and demanded, " To whom, madam, do you imagine that you owe your elevation?" " To God," answered she, " to some zealous servants, and to my own good fortune." Betskoy replied, " It is to me, madam, to whom you owe the crown; to me, who distributed money among the soldiers; to me, who engaged them,"

&c. &c.; and then he prostrated himself at the feet of the empress, who very naturally thought him mad, and spoke of him as such to those around her. Restraining herself, however, before him, and humouring the idea, she expressed her full conviction of his services, and, as a proof of it, charged him with the commission of having the crown made for her coronation.

What I write I had word for word from the Princess Daschkaw. Less than forty-eight hours before the death of the Empress Elizabeth, the whole court was split into parties, which kept a jealous watch over each other. Every avenue was filled with spies, and any communication between any of the parties was at the risk of the poniard. The princess, however, at that time between eighteen and nineteen years old, rose from her bed, repaired across the snow to the palace of the grand duchess, and passed some hours in conference with her. The first word she uttered was to ask what plan she had formed. "You are either an angel or a demon," exclaimed the grand duchess. "Neither," returned the princess; "but Elizabeth is dead, and the question is, what are your resolutions?" "To abandon myself to the course of events," said Catherine, "since I am unable to direct them."

Each of the parties proposed to give to Peter the Third its own creature as his wife, and to imprison or otherwise get rid of the grand duchess; but things turned out otherwise.

Count Orloff, her lover, a handsome, good-humoured, easy fellow, fond of the chase, fond of wine, and a great libertine, never meddling in any affair of state, flattered himself, after the death of Peter the Third, with sharing the honours of the throne along with the empress. It was a certain Bestoucheff who came to make an overture on this subject to the Chancellor Worontzow. The chancellor refused to listen to him, interrupting him in these words, "By what conduct have I merited the degradation of such a confidence as you now dare to propose?" At the same moment he hurried off to the empress, and remonstrated with her against the indecency and danger of such a proceeding, counselling her to retain Orloff, if such was her pleasure, as her lover, and to load him even with riches and honours, but not to think for a moment of a marriage which could only disgrace herself and her nation. He then hastened to Count Panin, confided to him the part he had taken, and implored him to second it. The project, however, of the marriage having transpired, the populace, in the utmost indignation, tore down one of the images of the empress, and after having whipped it publicly, dashed it to pieces. It was on this occasion that the four officers of whom I have spoken were exiled; and Princess Daschkaw, on whom some suspicion had fallen of being implicated with her friends in this outrage, was only saved from arrest by the circumstance of being in child-bed.

The part which the princess took in the revolution had rendered her on bad terms with all her family, whose hopes, founded on the taste of Peter the Third for her sister, a good-humoured, fat woman, without attractions and without talents, had been entirely overthrown. Her father and her brothers have refused to see her these several years.

Princess Daschkaw is by no means handsome. She is little, with a high and open forehead, large puffed-out cheeks, eyes neither large nor small, a little sunk in the socket, dark hair and eyebrows, nose somewhat flat, a wide mouth, thick lips, a round straight neck of the national form, open chest, not much of figure; she has ease in her movements, without the graces, and much affability of manner. The general expression of physiognomy is favourable. Her character is grave; she speaks our language fluently; all that she knows and thinks she does not say, but what she says she says simply and forcibly, and with the tone of truth. She has a heart lacerated by misfortune; and exhibits a decision and grandeur in her ideas, as well as boldness and pride in her mode of thinking. There is in her also, I am convinced, a profound spirit of rectitude and of dignity.

The princess is a lover of the arts. She understands both the men and the interests of her nation. She has a cordial aversion for despotism, as well as for everything which nearly or remotely tends to tyranny. She is intimately acquainted with the present minis-

try; and on this point delivers her sentiments without the least disguise, praising the good qualities of the men in office, and pronouncing with equal decision on their defects. With great justice of discrimination, she has seized upon all the advantages and vices of the new establishments. If an action is in itself grand, she cannot endure its being lowered by any little political views. "It is just and beautiful," she said to the empress, in rendering thanks to the Almighty for her successes on the tomb of Peter the First, "to have directed the Archbishop Platon to ascribe them first to God and then to the Czar; it is just and beautiful because it is true;—for why seek on such an occasion to administer any low flattery to a nation which knows what is due to itself and what is not?"

When Catherine projected her code of laws, the princess, whom she consulted, said, "You will never witness its conclusion, and at another time I would have told you the reason; but it will always be a great thing to have made the attempt; the very project will not fail to make an epoch." With the same undeviating veracity she would speak of the virtues and vices of her friends and enemies.

Her sorrows had brought on the appearance of age, and greatly deranged her health. I was much struck with her indulgence for her friend Mlle. Kamensky, whose warmth and even violence of manner, and unrestrained opposition of opinion, could not in the least ruffle or discompose her. In Decem-

ber this year, 1770, she will be only twenty-seven years of age, and she has the appearance of forty. She has sold everything she possessed in order to pay the debts of her husband, whom she loved to such a degree as to regard his death as the greatest of her misfortunes.

She is perfectly resigned to the obscurity of her life and the mediocrity of her fortune. She might, indeed, have figured in a style suitable to the highest pretensions, had she availed herself of a power authorized by the empress, to sell the property of her children,—which she would never consent to. One year after her intimacy with the empress, she was at the head of a conspiracy, or rather of a great event, the promoters of which, according to her opinion, were never worthy of the name of conspirators. She is as firm and decided in her hatred as in her friendship.

In London, she was desirous of seeing Paoli, who was as anxious to see her. She remarked much indecision both in his discourse and in his ideas, and in his mind much of that *little Italian grimace* which disfigures a really great man. These were her exact words. She could never forgive his being a pensioner and a hanger-on at the court; and, in reply to Mr. Walpole, who asked her the reason, " Poverty," she said, " is the proper pedestal for a man like him." Her idea, though only half expressed, I easily comprehended; but the secretary of embassy, with whom she was speaking, did not,

and the princess would not deign to explain herself further.

This Secretary Walpole having very indiscreetly indulged in some observations at the expense of our nation, I did not think myself justified in letting them pass, but brought this gentleman to apologize, by an assurance that he did not know that he was speaking in presence of a Frenchman. To this sort of excuse I replied, that it was not at all necessary to have two sorts of language, one for men who were present and another for those who were absent; protesting, for my own part, that what I had to say of him when his back was turned, I should have the courage to say before his face. Walpole went away, and the princess commended the reproof I had given him, adding, however, that had she been in my place when Walpole had the meanness to offer such an excuse, instead of a word of reply, she would have turned her back upon him with scorn; and I think she was right.

The princess possesses penetration, coolness, and judgment. She has a quick insight into the real nature of things, and could never bear to be made a subject of admiration, either from her natural modesty, or from the little value she herself attached to the part she had borne. She had some wish to see Rhullière, and to hear his account of the occurrences of the revolution; but this I opposed, representing to her, that in this relation,

whatever she did not contradict would be considered as acknowledged and approved by her—a testimony which the author would not fail to turn to his own credit. She embraced me, and did not see Rhullière.

Madame Neckar wished to give the princess a supper along with Madame Geoffrin—a party which I took occasion to prevent, because I foresaw that she would not be estimated at her proper value. I knew, indeed, that they wished to see her only that they might talk about her, and I believed that she had more to lose than to gain by such a rencontre, in the opinion of those two ladies and their coterie, as all would have required her to speak in character as chief of a conspiracy. Respecting all I can say with regard to my recollection of Rhullière's relation, it appeared to me little better than a tissue of romance, without any real knowledge of facts or persons, but such as before the lapse of a couple of centuries will nevertheless carry along with it all the authority of history.

The princess appeared to me a decided enemy of gallantry. She had been suspected of an intimacy with Count Panin, an idea at which she was utterly indignant. It was a matter of no small self-congratulation that, in respect to her character, the empress had never dared to speak to her on the subject of her love for Orloff, notwithstanding she had lived with her in habits of the greatest familiarity—a familiarity which never led to her dis-

grace. The princess, with the freedom of an old and understood friendship, visits the empress when she pleases, sits down, chats, and retires without ceremony.

If we are to give full credit to her testimony, there is one of the brothers Orloff, called *balafrè*, who is one of the greatest scoundrels on the earth. It vexes her to think that his success in the present war attaches a celebrity to his name of which he is altogether unworthy. The empress, she assures me, enjoys an admiration so well merited, and a love so general, amongst her subjects, that her stability on the throne is complete, and independent of party. "She has cut asunder every entanglement," said the princess, "with the right instrument, by shewing her people that their happiness in everything was the object of her thoughts, her wishes, and her actions. To such an extent, indeed, is she mistress and sovereign, that to-morrow, if she pleased, she might rid herself of Count Panin, the most powerful and the most respected man in the empire, whose death or disgrace would not at this time produce the least sensation."

The grand duke is so young that she can form no opinion of his character. Whether he was acquainted or not with the unhappy lot of his father, she had not been informed. Of what might have been the limit to the misfortunes of the empire under a drunken and imbecile prince, she professed

her ignorance, as well as of the height of splendour to which it might be advanced under such a sovereign as Catherine, which she conceived incalculable.

Princess Daschkaw has two children, whom she tenderly loves—a son and a daughter. She holds life in no great value. She has been two years on her travels, and she intends continuing abroad eighteen months longer; then returning to Petersburg to sojourn for a short time, and afterwards to retire to Moscow. Should you ask the reason of her disgrace, what shall I answer? Perhaps she did not find her services sufficiently rewarded; perhaps, in elevating Catherine to the government of the empire, she had the project of governing her; perhaps the suspicion under which she had fallen in the affair of the flagellated image might have had the effect of cooling the empress towards her; perhaps the princess had taught the empress a lesson, that what she had dared to do *for* her she might not be afraid to do *against* her; perhaps she might have aspired to the place of minister—even of first minister—at least to a place in the council; perhaps the princess took offence that her friend, whom she wished to make regent, had possessed the art, without her knowledge, and contrary to her projects, of making herself empress; perhaps she could not brook the indignity of being set aside amongst a herd of those to whom a new decoration had been given,—she who had moved at the head of those

personages, who had been honoured with the ancient order. Whatever it might be which led to her disgrace, certain it is that their mutual dissatisfaction did not manifest itself till the arrival of the court at Moscow. The Princess Daschkaw accompanied Catherine thither, and there, without explanation and without reproach, she separated from her sovereign, never to see her more.*

The empress's last visit to Moscow, during the sitting of the tribunal established for the completion of her code, was attended with circumstances stormy and threatening to her power. A general discontent amongst the nobles, occasioned by some cause which the princess mentioned, but which I have now forgotten, seemed to portend a second revolution. This apprehension, which was far from unfounded, accelerated the empress's return to Petersburg. All was soon afterwards tranquillized, and Catherine is as much as ever the object of adoration amongst all classes in the empire.

Princess Daschkaw seemed to have learned but one lesson in her intercourse with the court,—which was, to abate the warmth with which she followed up even any good or useful undertaking, if she was anxious for its success. "The ill-disposed," —it was her last remark to me,—"whilst they are very ready to approve, will take good care to ensure its failure, were it for no other reason than to de-

* This, as will have appeared in the Memoir, is not correct.

prive you of the honour of having thought of or suggested it. I have often done my friends an injury by the zeal with which I have espoused their cause, and spoiled the execution of some of the fairest projects by the enthusiasm with which they inspired me. Cold and pusillanimous souls have taken offence and been hurt at a warmth which they could not share. The one will withdraw themselves from you abashed, the others, annoyed and indisposed; and nothing is done."

When I went to take leave of her, she promised not to forget me, and begged not to be forgotten by me. She had the kindness also to say that I was one of the most agreeable men to listen to she had ever met with; and whether I was playing the wise man or the fool, she had always remarked that I was never otherwise than consistent and in character.

[*From Diderot's Works, published by Naigen. Vol.* 9. *Paris Edit.* 1798, 8*vo.*]

LETTERS

FROM

VOLTAIRE, ABBÉ RAYNAL, &c.

LETTERS

FROM

VOLTAIRE, ABBÉ RAYNAL, &c.

VOLTAIRE TO THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

Ferney, Thursday, May 9th, 1771.

The old man of Ferney, grown nearly blind, and overwhelmed with infirmities, would have hastened to throw himself at the feet of the Princess Daschkaw, had not his sad state of health prevented him. If the princess would come to-morrow (Friday), about seven o'clock in the evening, to honour us with her presence, and sup in our cottage along with her party, Madame Denis will do the honours of it, and the old invalid will consider this favour as one of the bright days of his life. He entreats permission to remain *en robe de chambre*, being a long time unable to dress otherwise. He begs the princess to accept his respectful homage.

FROM THE SAME.

Ferney, May 12th, 1771.

Madam,—The old man whom you have almost rendered young, thanks as much as he regrets you.

I shall not fail to boast to her imperial majesty of a sermon worthy of Plato* the Grecian himself, presented me by one who is no less worthy to be the friend of Tomeris. Happy those, madam, who accompany you to Spa!—unhappy we who remain behind on the banks of the Lake of Geneva! Our mountains will long resound the echo of your name —a name which will dwell for ever in my heart with admiration and respect.

THE OLD INVALID OF FERNEY.

FROM THE ABBÉ RAYNAL.

Berlin, July 29th, 1782.

MADAM,—The letter you did me the honour to write to me from Vienna, after being mis-sent from place to place, has at length reached me at Berlin. It is full of those characteristics of force, delicacy, and sensibility, which are united only in you. And what consolation does it afford me to interest such a person, and not only to interest, but to obtain her esteem and regard! I should have had the honour of sooner offering my thanks for all your kindness, had I not wished to give you some account of my present destiny. I am become a fixture at Berlin, from motives which will not escape your penetration; a place which does not offer the sort of society which I enjoyed with you and in your family, but it is not altogether destitute of people who are capable

* Plato was the name of the Archbishop of Moscow.

of attracting and pleasing; it furnishes, indeed, more means of gratification than my age permits me to indulge in. Assiduity in the work which engages me will in some degree perhaps replace those happy ties which are seldom formed except in early life, and in the country of one's birth. I cannot allow myself to doubt but you will meet with that reception on your return to Russia which has greeted you in every other part of Europe. If your principles be there adopted, and your ideas followed up in the spirit with which they are conceived, the state will derive new glory and new advantages. As for us, we should desire nothing better than that it should rest with you to fix the destiny of empires. The more I read history, and the more attentively I observe the present age, the more do you appear to me a being advanced beyond it. I have the honour to be, with the most tender and the most respectful attachment, madam, your most obedient and most humble servant,

RAYNAL.

FROM THE DUKE OF SUDERMANIA,

AFTERWARDS CHARLES XIII., KING OF SWEDEN.

On board the admiral's ship Gustavus the Third, August 20th, 1788.

MADAM,—A packet addressed to your highness, coming from Philadelphia, having fallen into my hands, I could not for a moment delay the gratifi-

cation of forwarding it to you. In the present unhappy circumstances separating two courts which ought to be united in the strictest bands of amity, I am too happy to seize an opportunity which presents itself of mitigating our common calamities. The present, indeed, offers me the additional pleasure of calling one to your remembrance who once had the satisfaction of enjoying your society, and who will always remain, with the most perfect consideration, madam, your very affectionate

CHARLES, DUKE OF SUDERMANIA.

FROM LA LANDE.

Paris, October 30th, 1789.

MADAM,—As your highness has expressed your opinion that the foreign correspondence should not be a charge burdensome to the Academy, for this once I presume to address directly to yourself the communication which I ought officially to transmit through M. Eüler, and am happy to profit by such an occasion of presenting the sincere homage of my gratitude and respect. The notices with regard to science which you have permitted me to make, must be at present of the most sterile nature. Politics is what now absorbs the attention of all the world. Not a single work of any importance in literature has appeared since the "Voyage of Anacharsis in Greece," by M. Barthe-

lemi. The discovery of a satellite of Saturn, which M. Herschel has made through his prodigious telescope of forty feet long, is the only thing of any account in astronomy which has occurred during this year. The edition of the new Encyclopædia, which has reached its thirty-fourth number, is the principal result of the labours of our sçavans, and it surpasses infinitely all the preceding editions. The regeneration of France, either as regards its constitution or its finances, is for us an epoch of the utmost consequence, and I fear not too favourable for the sciences, as they begin to talk already of diminishing the pensions of the *gens de lettres*. The troubles of France are a little calmed, but the spirit of insurrection among the people, and even among the soldiers, is a dangerous source of evil which threatens a long continuance of them. Accept, madam, my congratulations on the taking of Belgrade and Oczakow, an event which seems to accelerate the moment when Constantinople may boast her observatory and her academy, distinctions as yet denied even to Rome. The credit which your talents and enlightened views must command on the affairs of government renders these successes in some measure identified with yourself. I am, with the most profound respect and lively gratitude, madam, your highness's most humble and most obedient servant,

LA LANDE.

FROM THE DUKE D'ANHALT.

MADAM,—Painful as it is to take leave of those whom we respect and esteem, I could not but have sought to evade the moment of your departure; but natural as it may also be to give way to such a feeling, could I, on the other hand, be guilty of the ingratitude of permitting your departure without one word of acknowledgment to a person who has overwhelmed me with obligations? No, princess; never can I forget the kindness and the friendship which I have experienced from your indulgence. Most heartily should I despise myself if I were capable of doing so; and though daily exposed to occasions of losing the esteem of some who are justly dear to me, most unwilling should I be to run the risk of ever forfeiting my own—the only consolation which sometimes remains to those who have the misfortune to be misunderstood, or from false appearances to labour under some injurious suspicion. I earnestly desire and hope to meet you elsewhere, more content and more happy than in your own country, to whose meridian, princess, your merits are not adapted; and I entreat you to receive me with that sentiment of kindness with which you favour those amongst whom I have the honour to be, in perfect sincerity, your most humble and most obedient servant,

D'ANHALT.

LETTERS

FROM

THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH,

CONSORT OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER,

TO

THE PRINCESS DASCHKAW,

&c. &c.

Elizabeth, Empress of Russia.

Consort of the Emperor Alexander.

LETTERS

FROM

THE EMPRESS ELIZABETH,

&c. &c.

Petersburg, April 14th, 1801.

MADAM,—A testimonial of interest from one possessed of your merit, madame la princesse, cannot be otherwise than infinitely precious to me. Be good enough to receive my thanks for the letter you have written, and be persuaded of the sincere desire I have to see you again; a feeling which has gained strength in proportion as a few years more have taught me to estimate your qualities, without, however, being able to augment that perfect consideration with which I am always, madame la princesse, your very affectionate

ELIZABETH.

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* Since you so kindly signified to me the other day the desire you have of seeing me, I ven-

* This and five following billets were written when the empress was at Moscow.

ture to beg, madame la princesse, that I may be gratified by a visit from you this evening about seven o'clock, if nothing on your part should occur to prevent it. And let me hope from your friendship that you will not put any restraint on yourself, but act towards me with the greatest sincerity.

ELIZABETH.

I have the honour to send you, madame la princesse, the work which you were good enough to lend me some weeks ago, and to ask, at the same time, a thousand pardons for having kept it so long. It was a little mistake which occasioned this indiscretion. I hope, madame, that your health is good, and that you preserve the recollection of your very affectionate ELIZABETH.

It is only this very moment, madame la princesse, that your letter has reached me. Accept my thanks beforehand for the little dogs* which you so kindly destine for me, as well as an assurance of the pleasure with which I seize this occasion of receiving a visit from you, which I hope will be about eight o'clock in the evening, if perfectly convenient. Your very affectionate ELIZABETH.

* Puppies of King Charles the First's breed.

I have much feared, madame la princesse, that I should not have the pleasure of seeing you again before your departure; may I venture still to hope it, and to name seven o'clock to-morrow, if you can come at that hour without inconvenience.

ELIZABETH.

I beg you to believe, madame la princesse, that the desire I have to see you again is quite equal to that which you have been so good as to express. I will look forward to this pleasure to-morrow at one o'clock, should you then be disengaged. Your very affectionate ELIZABETH.

Petersburg, June 27th, 1802.

MADAME LA PRINCESSE,—I have felt most sensibly the interest you have evinced towards me, and if I have failed in rendering my thanks as speedily as I ought, it is most assuredly not through a want of gratitude. My health had in some degree suffered from the shock which my heart has lately experienced.* Without being seriously ill, I have been continually more or less suffering, and I was unwilling to yield to any one the pleasure of expressing the deep sense I feel of your attention.

I beg pardon, madam, for thus speaking of my-

* This is supposed to allude to the death of the empress's infant child.

self; but you have spoiled me, princess; you have rendered me presumptuous by the interest which you never cease to manifest in whatever concerns me. The weather is very favourable to your sojourn in the country, if it is as fine as with us; and you will find no difficulty in amusing yourself. I sincerely hope that the quiet life you are there leading will be conducive to your health; and pray be assured, princess, of the perfect consideration with which I am your very affectionate

ELIZABETH.

The emperor, who is very sensible of your recollection of him, madame la princesse, charges me to present his compliments; and my sister does the same.

April, 1807.

The Countess Pratasoff, on her arrival here, has delivered the packet with which she was charged for me, madame la princesse; and if I have been flattered by your recollection of me, and gratified by the justice you render to the attachment I feel to the memory of the Empress Catherine, I have been no less grieved at the same time to perceive by the tone of your letter that you regard the gift of her portrait as a sort of legacy. Permit me to refuse its acceptance under such a title, but to receive it as a proof of the conformity of our sentiments for

that great sovereign, as well as an assurance of those which you so kindly express in my behalf.

After the sorrow* which you have lately experienced, in which I have very sincerely participated, it is natural that your thoughts and wishes should detach themselves more and more from this world. It is the consolation of souls which have suffered much to be so occupied, and to look with satisfaction to that moment which unfolds another and a better life; but may I not express a hope that the moment is not so nearly approaching as you, in recommending to my care your young friend, seem to imagine. Under every circumstance, however, Miss Wilmot may rest assured that nothing shall be wanting which it may be in my power to do for her; and in thus replying to your wishes, madame la princesse, I have pleasure in testifying the sentiments of distinguished esteem with which I am your very affectionate ELIZABETH.

[THE Editor must once more disclaim all personal feelings in publishing the following letter; but it would ill become her to withhold so touching a proof of the noble nature of her revered friend, because she herself was the object of the maternal care and solicitude which it exhibits.]

* The death of Prince Daschkaw, her son.

FROM PRINCESS DASCHKAW TO THE DOWAGER EMPRESS MARY, WIDOW OF THE EMPEROR PAUL.

Troitskoe, July 13th, 1806.

MADAM,—The many virtues and benevolence of heart for which your imperial majesty is so conspicuously eminent, will not only, I trust, lead you to pardon the liberty I am taking in addressing to your majesty my very humble prayer, but dispose you to receive it with your accustomed indulgence. Deign, madam, by your favour to console the latter days of one who may soon be expected to close a life of almost continued suffering. During my residence in England, I enjoyed the friendship of the family of Wilmot and their relatives, persons of condition and of the most respectable connexions, both in that country and in Ireland. One of them, the most valued of my friends, the late Mrs. Hamilton, prevailed on her young cousin, Miss M. Wilmot, to visit me, and for a season to share my solitude. Her virtues, her talents, her modesty, in fine, her friendship for me, have for the space of three years embellished and added charms to my retirement; and now, conscious as she is how much more than ever in my present state I have need of all the consolation which friendship can afford, she has formed the resolution of remaining with me, rather than quit Russia in the spring with her elder sister, who had the honour of being presented to your imperial majesty last summer. No one, madam, can appre-

ciate better than your majesty the solace and the resources, as well as the duties of friendship; and such are my obligations to this charming person, that I am deeply sensible they can be repaid, on my part, only by the most unceasing solicitude for her welfare. Hence, madam, I throw myself at your imperial majesty's feet, most earnestly to implore your gracious consideration on her behalf after my death, an event which I should look to with tranquillity were I assured that Miss Wilmot, as long as she remains in this country, might hope to enjoy the security of your protection. I dare, madam, to express my conviction that she is worthy of it, as well as my persuasion that your majesty would understand and appreciate her merits, were circumstances to bring her to your acquaintance; and should the favour which I am here tempted to entreat, be accorded, my last moments will be soothed by the consciousness that I have in part at least been enabled to fulfil my duty towards her.

May I be permitted to encroach still further on your majesty's kindness by preferring another request, the nature of which will require a little explanation?

More than nine years have now elapsed since I made a will, sanctioned by my own relatives as well as by those of my husband, and among them by the respectable Jerobkine, and Prince Repnin. I entrusted it to the archives of the Foundling Hospital, adding at the same time a small donation to

that establishment, which I have since at intervals repeated. The executors of my will were my late brother, and my husband's cousin, Prince Ivan Gagarin. The former I have had the affliction to lose; and as it is possible the latter may be removed before me, I have under such a contingency requested the council of guardians to take upon itself the same responsibility of carrying into effect the purposes of my will; and in order to prove how much I had at heart the fulfilment of the provisions therein made, I presented at the same time four thousand roubles as an offering of charity to the inmates of that benevolent institution, who, under your imperial majesty's especial auspices, cannot properly be denominated unfortunate. I now wish, madam, to place on the security of this hospital the value of five thousand pounds sterling,* in favour of my young friend Miss Wilmot; and further, to supplicate the aid of your powerful influence, if necessary, towards the accomplishment of these my last wishes, that the sum thus placed may be duly secured and guaranteed for her use. Its remittance, on my part, will be immediately made, as soon as I may have the happiness of receiving a gracious answer

* The sum here spoken of was not eventually placed, as was intended when this letter was written, in the Foundling Hospital, but was remitted to England; and it here becomes the Editor to state, in justice to the princess, that this bequest was in addition to other very munificent obligations of a similar nature which had been conferred upon her.

to my prayer, which will add the warmest sentiments of gratitude to those deep feelings of respect with which I have the honour to subscribe myself,

Your Imperial Majesty's

Most humble and devoted servant,

PRINCESS DASCHKAW.

REPLY OF THE DOWAGER EMPRESS TO THE FOREGOING.

Pawlowsky, 24th August, 1806.

I HAVE received your letter, madam, and have the greatest satisfaction in assuring you that I can fully appreciate the motives which have influenced your proceedings in regard to Miss M. Wilmot. Your attachment to her cannot fail to be considered by me as a sure testimony of her merit; and should she at any time stand in need of my protection, I have no hesitation in assuring her of it. With respect to the dispositions you have made in her favour at the Foundling Hospital, the rules of that establishment afford a sufficient guarantee that your intentions will be most faithfully attended to by the council of guardians. These rules oblige them to fulfil, as a most sacred duty, the intentions of a will sanctioned by the laws, and of which this institution is made the depositary, and scrupulously to preserve the funds entrusted to it.

If any declaration on my part can contribute to

tranquillize your mind on this subject, receive, madam, my most positive assurance that the laws of the hospital will be most punctually attended to. Allow me the pleasure of adding to these assurances the expression of those feelings of esteem and regard with which I remain, princess,

Your very affectionate

MARY, &c.

SUPPLEMENT:

CONTAINING A

PERSONAL NARRATIVE BY THE EDITOR,

AND

LETTERS OF HER SISTER,

MISS WILMOT.

THE motive for publishing the following narrative has been sufficiently noticed in the Introduction to Princess Daschkaw's Memoirs. It was originally written and addressed to Lord Glenbervie, in the year 1814, as a letter; and though several additions have been lately made to it, it has been more convenient to preserve its form as such, than to cast it into a different shape. It is fit, however, to offer this apology for its extravagant length as an epistolary communication.

TO LORD GLENBERVIE.*

DEAR LORD GLENBERVIE, — I have wasted at least half an hour in thinking how I ought to begin the history which your lordship asks of me, and twenty times I should have thrown away my pen, had not my promise, and an animated recollection of the extreme kindness with which you have, at my request, embarked in a very troublesome business, made me feel ashamed of such an idea.

To make my little narrative the more intelligible, I ought, perhaps, to describe the characters of those individuals of my family whose minds first exercised an influence over mine, and to whose natures, pure and unhackneyed in the ways of the world, a romantic act appeared not unnatural; but this would be writing volumes. The death of a beloved brother, which happened in the year 1802, gave me the first pang of misery I ever experienced. Its effect upon my mind was deep and deadening. I still shudder at recalling the strange insensibility to all the interests and occupations of life which I

* Sylvester Douglas, first Lord Glenbervie.

then endured. All was mechanical; I had in a manner ceased to exist, and every wish of my soul was buried in his grave.

To one sensation I was indeed alive—it was that of agony, in contemplating the figure of my beloved father, dressed in deep mourning for his child, and struggling with unobtrusive sorrow to suppress feelings which time and religion have soothed, but never obliterated. He mourned for a youth brave and beautiful, advancing rapidly in the paths of honour; for he was appointed at the age of nineteen to the command of a sloop of war. The ship was stationed in the West Indies, and ere he had taken possession of her, he fell a victim to the yellow fever which then raged at Jamaica.

It would be difficult to express the appalling effect of this misfortune on my father, full as he had been of all the fond anticipations, and dreams, and hopes so natural to an affectionate parent for an absent child, whilst all the powers of his noble mind were employed in soothing my mother's sorrows. The storms of winter had never been heard without anxiety, news from abroad made his heart palpitate, and the day he brought home a letter from Charles was a day of triumph. Now all was calm; a thousand benevolent sympathies, which had given a peculiar zest to his life, seemed broken at once; and in the generous disinterestedness of his nature, it was only by a sup-

pressed sigh or a starting tear that he appeared to know how much he suffered!

I shared my father's feelings, without any communication on either side; but (more selfish than he) I was conscious of my own suffering, and I longed to awaken his mind as well as my own from a state of such painful indifference to all the objects of life.

This made me form a wish which my more matured judgment condemns as the result of impatience under a dispensation of Providence. I wished to be driven into the necessity of exertion, by being thrown into new scenes in a foreign country; and the animated letters of my sister, who was then in France, revived a desire for travelling, which had always been with me a favourite wish. A singular chain of circumstances led, at that critical period, to the unexpected accomplishment of this desire.

The Princess Daschkaw, when in Ireland, had been well known to many of my relations, and had often been, in my presence, the favourite theme of conversation with Mrs. Hamilton (daughter of Archbishop Ryder), who was not only a near relation of my father's, but one whose judgment he had been accustomed from his earliest youth to value and respect.

I had often listened with wonder and rapture, when a child, to various anecdotes with which her memory was stored, and to which her enthusiasm

for the princess gave a charm that easily communicated itself to a young and ardent imagination. I longed to see this extraordinary woman, whose character dwelt upon my mind more like that of a kind fairy than anything human; but like other fairy tales, this was nearly forgotten, when, at the period to which I have alluded, Mrs. Hamilton, with whom I was in constant correspondence, and who of course knew the situation of my mind, happened to mention that her friend, who had so often excited my admiration, was returned once more to her country place, after having supported, with her characteristic nobleness of mind, disgrace and exile during the reign of Paul the First. She even suggested the idea that, if I could prevail upon my parents to let me spend a year or two with the princess in Russia, it would make her the happiest of women, and that I should be received by her as by a mother, and considered as her child.

An idea thus awakened, proved an excitement which roused me from my stupor. I wrote to Mrs. Hamilton, who loved me as if I had been her own daughter, and told her that, by creating a new anxiety for my father, I was persuaded I should restore his feelings more quickly to their natural tone than my presence could possibly do. She was delighted, and entered into my views with a zeal and ardour peculiar to her nature.

My father, when told of this scheme, positively refused his consent; and I should have relinquished

it, of course, had not Mrs. Hamilton taken it up with such warmth, and seconded it with arguments so rational, that she won over my mother and all the various members of my family, and at length my dear indulgent father also, who feared he should do me injustice if he refused his assent to what my heart was so strongly set upon. That assent once gained, I clearly saw that, in secret, he admired the courage which most people thought such a step demanded; and perhaps this was necessary to keep alive that very courage; for it had a whole year to contend with far other feelings, as the season for going to Russia had elapsed before letters arrived from the princess to my father, (with whom she had been acquainted in England,) expressive of her feelings on the hope of welcoming to her heart a daughter of his. It was not, therefore, till the following spring (1803) that I quitted home.

I must pass over that scene in silence. My journey from Cork (my native place) to Dublin was unmarked by any incident. There I spent some weeks with Mrs. Hamilton; then I crossed the Channel and proceeded to London, where, in the warm friendship of our relations, Mr. John Eardley Wilmot and his family, I felt how doubly gratifying is the love which has been secured for us by a parent's virtues.

An introduction to Count Worontzow and his daughter was followed by my obtaining letters of introduction to friends of theirs at St. Petersburg.

Mr. Wilmot, in conjunction with another friend, arranged everything for my voyage, under the protection of a lady whose relations were established at St. Petersburg; and early in the month of June, with anticipated happiness and full of hopes, I embarked at Gravesend.

So buoyant were my spirits, that even after bidding adieu to my friends, I dwelt more upon the new source of delight which their friendship afforded me than on the pain of separating from them.

We lay at anchor off Yarmouth for a tedious fortnight, in consequence of an embargo on the shipping. At length we set sail in a considerable fleet with convoy; and the novelty, as well as the magnificence of such a sight, divested the tremendous ocean of almost all its horrors to my imagination; so that I enjoyed on deck all the fine weather we had during three weeks that our voyage lasted. This was considered a prosperous voyage; it was unvaried by any event except going on shore for three or four hours at Elsineur, where we saw the Castle of Kronenburg and Hamlet's Garden, both objects of much interest.

Arrived at St. Petersburg, we anchored in the beautiful river Neva, on this side the bridge of boats, waiting for several hours till permission was obtained for passing the portcullis. I would not quit the ship, as the lady with whom I went could not land till the evening. I mention this to notice the singularly amusing picture which presented it-

self, passing to and fro upon the bridge. It was a brilliant day in July, and people of all nations, in their different costumes, flitted before our eyes, intent on business or pleasure, little dreaming what a theatrical effect they produced to greet our arrival. Ambassadors from several courts exhibited in their dress and equipage the pantomime of royalty, while the lower orders of their several countrymen betrayed in their looks and manners the characteristic differences which so strongly distinguish nations.

The little booths, where fruits and baubles were sold, arrested by a very natural sympathy the most opposite of beings,—Christians and Jews, Englishmen and French, Swedes and Russians, long beards and shorn chins, women dressed in the fashion of both the past and present century; cavaliers on horseback, ladies and their duennas, Turks, Armenians, Cossacks, Calmucs, fiddlers, dancers, formed fantastic groupes, which rapidly succeeded one another in the drollest variety.

I was diverted beyond expression; and could not help thinking that a clever person, situated as I was, might have written a volume worth reading, on the adventures of the bridge for a day, without much embellishing the truth.

In the evening, I sent to inform Madame de Paliansky (a niece of Princess Daschkaw, by whom I was expected) of my arrival, and likewise Dr. Rogerson, with whom Mrs. Hamilton had been intimate. He very kindly came to receive me on

landing, and conducted me to the house of the lady whom I have named; but the very moment I quitted the ship, and with unsteady feet attempted to walk on shore, it rushed upon me for the first time with a thrill of horror, that I was separated from every friend on earth and every natural protector,—blessings of which till then I was scarcely conscious, from never having known their loss.

The contrast between the open arms of a heart-felt welcome, and the polite embrace, but ill-suppressed curiosity, of strangers, chilled me. For many minutes I could scarcely believe that all was not a dream; and when Dr. Rogerson quitted me, I had not even the sound of my native language to dissipate the illusion. A large packet of letters from England did so, with more pain than pleasure; but they brought tears to my relief, and in a few minutes I shook off the weakness which oppressed me. I felt I was now to act for myself, and I could not be insensible to the hospitality and kindness of my new acquaintance, who was young, pretty, and engaging in her manners. We soon became intimate; she introduced me to her mother and sisters, and to several of the princess's relatives, and I should have spent a most agreeable time at her house, had not my mind been very uneasy in consequence of stories which assailed me on every side respecting her whom I was henceforth to consider as a mother. She was represented to me as a most cruel and vindictive person, violent in her

temper, and destructive of the happiness of every creature who was unfortunate enough to approach her. I was told that she lived in a castle situated in a dreary solitude, far removed from the society of any civilized beings, where she was all-powerful, and so devoid of principle that she would invariably break open and read the letters which came to me, and those I sent to my friends, taking care to suppress any that might be displeasing to her. In a word, I created a sort of interest among my new acquaintances which was quite alarming, and I was repeatedly warned against putting myself into the power of a tyrant, from which it would be a species of miracle if I escaped.

As these stories came from both English and Russians, I could at best only suppose them exaggerations of the truth, and enough remained to terrify me. Again I thought of her as a fairy, but no longer as that beneficent being who showered blessings wherever she appeared.

Poisoned as my mind was, I shuddered at the idea of her; nor did the kind and maternal style of her letters undeceive me; on the contrary, all her expressions of kindness appeared like snares to entangle me, and for a moment I was worked up to the resolution of returning to England while I was yet safe and beyond the fatal effects of her power.

At length, however, I reflected on the injustice I might possibly be doing her, on the injustice I was doing to Mrs. Hamilton, and on the foolish figure

which I should present at home, chased from Russia by a phantom, embodied by my own credulity.

I imparted to Sir John Warren,* the British ambassador, when he called upon me, all my fears and wishes; and, encouraged by his good-nature, as well as by a promise that he would watch over me, and insure my safe return in case I should wish it, I quitted Petersburg with an English family of the name of Haliday, and with an aching heart I arrived at Moscow in four days.

There I found letters from the princess, informing me that she was not quite well, and therefore could not come to meet me; but telling me that Madame de Merlin, a niece of her husband, would conduct me to Troitskoe, (her country place,) and remain there some time, which she did. At Moscow, I became acquainted with Prince Daschkaw, whose manners immediately assumed a friendly tone; and on perceiving that I was a good deal out of spirits, (of which I believe he had learned the cause from my companions,) he spoke to me of his mother in the most open manner, allowing that she possessed some peculiarities, and a degree of candour which created enemies for her, but mentioning traits of her character in which I recognised the being I had till lately believed her to be. He added, that he was persuaded she would love me as her child, and that I might depend upon his being at all times a brother to me.

* Lady Warren was gone to England.

Cheered in some degree by this conversation, I set out for Troitskoe with less reluctance, half ashamed of my fears, yet fully expecting to dislike the princess and everything I met with.

It was not till the evening of the following day that we arrived, and I beheld with terror the solitary castle, the scene of my threatened imprisonment! Its gates and doors were all thrown open, and as we proceeded through suites of apartments, many a figure glided past us, and many a face peeped out of side doors to gaze upon the strangers. At last the sorceress appeared! and if the singularity of her dress and figure fully justified the title, so did the fascination of her countenance, where the noblest qualities of mind, blended with an expression of the softest sensibility, awed and attracted at the same instant.

She wore a long cloth coat, with a large silver star on the left side; her head-dress was a man's nightcap, and round her neck was a coloured silk handkerchief, which *friendship* had consecrated to the same use for more than twenty years. It was the gift of Mrs. Hamilton, to secure her from taking cold one evening, and she would never, in her evening walks, wear any other.

There was something in her reception of me at once so dignified, so affectionate, so true, so warm, and so graceful, that it went to my heart; and before she had uttered a word, except "WELCOME," I felt that I loved her more than any one I had seen

since I quitted my own family; indeed, every one I had seen since then were utter strangers to me. With her I could strike one chord of sympathy, which in a foreign land vibrates to the heart! We knew and loved the same people; and I can never forget the delicacy with which she seemed to penetrate and play into my feelings, recalling circumstances and individuals familiar to my remembrance, and stealing me from myself by the charm of her conversation, heightened by her beautiful expressions in broken English, which conveyed an idea of artless simplicity peculiarly delightful. A cloud of melancholy, which often shaded her fine countenance, inclined one to respect her for having known sorrow. It seemed to reproach me silently, for my cruelty in having harboured an unkind thought of her, even for a moment; and when I retired to my own apartments and to reflection, I was astonished at the power she already possessed over me. I believe I was not quite pleased with myself for being so quickly won, and formed resolutions to be very wise and very cautious before I gave her my implicit confidence; but when I saw her again the next day, every shadow of distrust vanished before a face which was ever bright with the radiant beams of *truth*.

Each day seemed to increase her partiality and kindness towards me, and in her society and that of Mlle. Istlainoff, her niece, who always lived with her, my time passed most agreeably. I was inexpres-

sibly interested in trying to develop the character of the princess, whose countenance was more speaking and more varied than that of any other person I had ever beheld. The effect of time had only mellowed its expression, and softened into benevolence the pride of character which once distinguished her, and which still left its traces visible, though faint.

Four weeks passed without my receiving letters from home, and I had many hours of uneasiness. In the meantime, several relations and friends of the princess found their way to Troitskoe, which was in truth situated rather in a solitude, as it was environed for many miles by her own extensive lands and forests. She presented me to all these friends in the most flattering manner, and I soon discovered, by their delighted looks and attentive manners, that such introductions must have been followed by encomiums spoken in Russ, of which I could not understand a word.

At the end of these four weeks, the wished-for letters from home arrived, and my joy upon the occasion was actually less than that of the princess, who I found had been in downright misery upon the subject, and she gave them to me with such genuine delight as could only proceed from a feeling heart like hers.

As soon as the first sledge-road made travelling easy to the princess, she prepared for our journey to Moscow. On the morning of our departure, a most amusing scene of preparation and bustle took

place; but just before we started, the princess and all her attendants, with many of the peasants, went into the church to kiss the images, and to pray for a safe and prosperous journey. We then set forward, and found the cold so intense as to cause our frozen breath to hang in little icicles from the roof and sides of the princess's coach, in which I was.

The kibitkas in which the attendants travelled were like large infants' cradles—beds, bedclothes, and all; and though open to the weather, they are warmer and more comfortable than a coach. The birch trees, which appear to be the pride of Russian scenery, with their delicate branches feathered with snow, and hung with icicles, giving back the brilliant light of the sun with a thousand colours glittering in its rays, saved the journey from a fatiguing sameness to the eye, which had a cheerless expanse of snow to wander over; but the frequent recurrence of dark forests skirted by these beautiful trees, like fairy creations, was too uncommon and too magnificent a sight not to console me for the cold; and even the strong resemblance which a coach raised on a sledge, surging along through unbeaten snow, bears to a ship at sea, was a circumstance of novelty which helped to beguile the way.

We slept the first night at Serpoukoff, where the princess had a house of her own, and where every preparation for our comfort had been made by the first detachment of her servants. The authorities of the town came immediately to welcome her, and

I can fancy that I now see her, fresh and unfatigued, pacing up and down the room, conversing with the seneschal, forgetting that supper was announced, and her young companions both sleepy and hungry, longing for his departure.

The next evening, we arrived at Moscow, whose gilded domes and cupolas shone resplendent in the setting sun. The palace of the princess, built after her own design, is a very beautiful structure, but unfinished. I found that her kind care had changed the appearance of my apartments from a cheerless wild look to a most elegant, warm, well-furnished suite of rooms, with a pianoforte, books, flowers, writing-table, &c., and her own picture, to give a charm to these kind attentions.

She had told me long before we quitted Troitskoe that as French would be the language I should hear in all companies, I ought to accustom myself to the familiar sound and use of it, and that she would be my instructress. For this purpose she desired me to write her a note every morning, as an exercise, which she would correct and send back to me. We continued this practice for several months, and I preserved the exercises, with her comments upon them, as memorials of her affection and goodness to me.

The reason why I mention this circumstance will appear in the course of my narrative.

No sooner was her arrival at Moscow known, than her palace was crowded with visitors. She

presented me to them in the same flattering manner that she had done at Troitskoe. `Everything was so new,—in manners, language, dress, hours,—and everybody was so kind to me, that I enjoyed myself in the highest degree, and only felt the more happy, from knowing that to the dear princess's affection, I, as a stranger, was indebted for it all.

We dined out almost every day, and went to private balls, to concerts, or public assemblies, almost every evening. I cannot resist noticing one of these entertainments as being national to a degree which is now almost unknown, and as being connected with a trait of the princess.

Count Alexis Orloff lived at Moscow, and his only child, a daughter, remarkable for her beauty and accomplishments, but much more so for her uncommon sweetness of disposition and her virtues, was just then introduced into public society. She became the theme of universal admiration, and her father expressed so strong a desire that he might obtain for this darling child the approbation of the person "*whose praise he most valued,*" that the princess at length yielded her consent to receive their visit.

When Count Orloff arrived, the princess, going towards him, and giving him her hand to kiss, said, "So long a period of time has elapsed, M. le Comte, and so many events have happened to change the world in which we once existed, that I consider this more like the meeting of departed

spirits in a better world, than a renewal of any earthly acquaintance; and this sweet angel," added the princess, (tenderly embracing the young countess,) "who now brings us together, completes the illusion."

From that time Count Orloff appeared to rejoice in every opportunity of doing anything which could bring his daughter into the society of the princess; and on being told that the princess had said that a ball at his house might give me the very best idea of a genuine Russian entertainment, he begged of her to name her own time; and he gave a fête, entering into her views as much as possible.

On being presented to him, I cannot but confess that I shrank involuntarily from giving my hand to be kissed by the *too celebrated* Count Alexis Orloff, whilst as I had been well tutored, it was necessary for me to touch his forehead with my lips, according to the old Russian mode, which was indispensable amongst the Muscovites. He was a magnificent looking man, and wore a picture of the Empress Catherine, which was covered with a diamond instead of crystal or glass, and surrounded with splendid brilliants.

His daughter's dress was made of English gingham, which contrasted comically with the splendour of her attendants, and the diamond cipher of the Empress Catherine, which she wore on her shoulder as demoiselle d'honneur.

The persons who always attended behind the count's chair or when he moved were two heyducs

and a dwarf: his fool roamed about more at liberty, amusing or tormenting the company, and as full of wit and malice as of freedom and folly. But the count's lovely daughter was the constant object of his tenderest care and admiration. She danced so beautifully, and with such native grace and dignity, that her movements seemed a sort of language, which expressed the simplicity and beauty of her mind.

She performed, by the count's desire, the shawl dance, the gipsy, the Cossack, the tambourine, and some others; and two of the maid servants were brought forward, to exhibit some figures that were not dignified enough for the young countess. At the end of each figure-dance she approached her father, kissed his hand and that of the princess, and he threw a shawl over her shoulders, with a parent's watchful care. Besides these, the ecossaise, and waltz, and sundry quadrilles, gave the company an opportunity of taking part in the amusement, whilst slaves, of various nations, and children, habited each in their own national costume, wandered through the suites of rooms which were thrown open, and added much to the peculiarity of the scene. Refreshments were boundless; and when supper was announced—but I must give up description, such was the quantity, and so indescribable the quality, of what was on the tables, and handed round and round in quick succession.

The health of the princess was drunk to the sound of trumpets, every guest standing up; and as her

slightest wish was instantly obeyed, various favourite national ballads, which she chose me to hear, were made to interrupt from time to time the full band of music which had played during supper. When that was at length ended, the count rose up, and thanking the princess for the honour she had conferred on his poor house, led her in a polonaise, followed by all the company, in pairs, back to the ball-room; in the antechamber leading to which was now placed, in consequence of an order sent from the supper table, a full band of horn music, the first I had ever heard, and which the princess had described to me at Troitskoe.

When we were not otherwise engaged, the princess had a circle at home, where the surviving persons who had distinguished themselves during the reign of Catherine, glittered in diamond stars, talked of her splendid court, of their different exploits and importance, fancying themselves young again, and brilliant as the sparkling gems with which their old bones were almost covered. I used to delight in looking at the princess amidst a group of her contemporaries;—she was a creature of so different an order; for while they were bedaubed with red and white paint, and covered with jewels and finery, the freshness of her complexion, which had never at any period of her life been assisted by rouge, and the simplicity of her singular dress, harmonizing with the character of her countenance, at once distinguished her, with all her

characteristic traits of truth, nobleness, and self-respect, accustomed to receive homage, but ignorant of the art of paying it.

Besides the evening amusements, which I have mentioned, we had parties of traineaux, and parties to the ice mountains in the mornings; so that the winter was a succession of gaieties, in which my amusement was evidently the kind princess's chief object, though I was not aware till the end of the season that it had been her only one, and that for some years she had made it a rule not to quit her own house in the evenings. This circumstance was told me by Prince Daschkaw, who had a house at Moscow, and a separate establishment from that of his mother, but who was generally of her parties, and behaved to her with that profound deference which is so remarkable in the manners of the Russians to their parents. Prince Daschkaw, who had been the idol of his mother, had married, early in life, so much against her approbation that she would never acknowledge his wife. The marriage was not fortunate; the Princess Anne lived on one of her husband's estates in the country, and they corresponded constantly, though separated for many years.

In the round of amusements which I have attempted to describe, the winter glided rapidly away, and in spring we returned to Troitskoe. During that summer we made a journey into Poland, where the princess had an estate, situated near Mohilof.

Few incidents worth notice occurred in this excursion, I will therefore pass it over in silence. We reached Troitskoe before autumn had set in, and again established ourselves there in our old habits.

Many traits of the dear princess recur to my memory as I write. Her love for every trifle to which affection or sentiment gave a value was quite remarkable; and any such, however insignificant, together with the most rare and costly things she possessed, were treasured up in cases which she always kept in her bed-room. When any one of these cases was opened, the mixture which appeared was very amusing. Medals, gems, smelling-bottles, antiques, cameos, snuff-boxes, an English thimble and sixpence, (which ranked high in her estimation,) miniatures, and souvenirs of various kinds, which she produced from them, gave rise to many curious and interesting communications. She presented me with several things, which are endeared to me by her manner, and by little stories attached to them.

On one occasion, her magnificent present was an opal which had belonged to Christina, Queen of Sweden, who gave it to one of her ministers, and whose son exchanged it with Count Panin for a diamond of equal size: he gave it to the princess to add to her collection of gems. Another time it was perhaps the English thimble, or the sixpence above alluded to, or some interesting miniatures, or a Birmingham almanack like a medal, with Shakspeare's bust on the reverse; and

the next time a watch of Peter the Great, or a blood-stone snuff-box which had belonged to the Empress Elizabeth, her godmother.

One of her last gifts, which she bestowed with a remarkable mixture of pleasure and reluctance, was an old fan. This fan had been used by the Empress Catherine (then grand duchess) on the first evening that Princess Daschkaw ever met her, and when she was so enchanted by the peculiar charm of her conversation and manner as to make that evening the great hinge on which the events of her own future life turned. The grand duchess dropped the fan at the moment of rising to go home, and the princess took it up and presented it to her. The grand duchess, embracing her, begged the princess to keep it as a souvenir of the first evening they had passed together, and which she hoped would prove the beginning of a friendship which would only end with their lives. The impression made on the princess was so deep that she valued this first little gift more than any she received afterwards from the empress, however magnificent; and she had intended to have it buried in her grave. She told me this, and added, with a sort of triumphant affection so peculiar and characteristic, "*Now, you must understand, and I will make you to feel what is my love for you—I give you dat which I did intend to bury in my own tomb!*"

I used occasionally to note down little anecdotes or traits of the princess's mind or character, which

appeared in her sometimes very delightful conversation; and on no occasion was it more interesting than when religion became the subject. She was a conscientious observer, both for herself and all the members of her family, of the respect due to the stated forms of the established faith of her country; and although in the free intercourse of private friendship one might easily discover that many of the numerous ceremonies of the Greek church appeared to her as being less of Divine than human origin; and as most of its guardian ministers, uneducated and taken from the lowest classes, were ill qualified to adorn its doctrines; yet I have seen her shed tears during her acts of devotion; and in the strange mass of human contradictions which it would be difficult to disentangle, I am almost tempted to say that a considerable share of superstition mingled in the web, and gave her at times a picturesque or poetical effect, which brought out in striking relief the strong and ever-varying powers which were so peculiarly her own.

With all this, there was a high-prevailing principle which ruled her conduct, before which superstition shrank into insignificance; for with heart and hopes in heaven, she bowed to Divine dispensations and worldly trials, and walked forward (more erect perhaps than humble) on her path of duty.

I was much struck on one occasion by her saying, "I have heard many people make great professions, and I have known many rigid performers of certain

external observances; but I never yet met with any one whose high conceptions of the greatness and goodness of the Deity equalled what I *feel*. I cannot lower it to the mundane ideas which confine the generality of people, and which make them reduce their Maker nearly to a level with themselves. I cannot suppose that my Creator influences every act of my life; I am not presumptuous enough to imagine it! In forming a creature, and endowing it with a full perception of right and wrong, I conceive that absolute liberty of choice is placed by the Almighty in the power of each individual; else, what is justice? Convinced of this, and of future reward or punishment, according to the use I make of such liberty, I very early reflected on my lot in life, and the duties belonging to it. These I have endeavoured to fulfil, and if I have failed, it is through error of judgment. My ideas of right I have invariably followed, to the prejudice of worldly interests; the hope therefore of acquittal at the great day of judgment sustains me under many a weary and melancholy hour."

On another occasion, when conversing with modern philosophers and underminers of our faith, she told me she could not resist saying, "And what does all this lead to? I am not eloquent enough to puzzle a good cause by force of argument, but here is a very simple idea, which satisfies me. My belief is fixed, and incapable of yielding to your reasoning; but, suppose it otherwise—you

make me hazard all to gain nothing. Is not that a self-evident folly, too egregiously so to be reasoned upon? If your principles be virtuous, just, and good, those of the New Testament are eminently so likewise; and what rewards, what noble incentives to virtue, do they not hold out! What consolation in misfortune!"

In listening to the recital of the events of the princess's youth, of which she often spoke with her characteristic openness, I had sometimes expressed my astonishment that she had never written a narrative of her own life. She smiled, and said it was a remark which had frequently been made, but that she shrunk from the task, and had never been able to overcome her repugnance to it. It was in the autumn of the first year which I passed with the princess that I renewed the subject, and urged her to undertake it, from observing that although her employments were various, (for she was her own steward, overseer, head-gardener, head-mason, and went through an incredible quantity of business,) yet so clever and so quick was she, that still many hours hung wearily, and some domestic sorrows pressed heavily upon her heart. I felt persuaded that such an employment would dissipate some gloomy moments, little thinking, I must confess, of anything beyond the object which I mention, and the perusal of so interesting a manuscript. At length I was happy enough to prevail upon her to undertake it, when she declared, to my utter astonishment, that she

would dedicate it to me, and that I might at a future period give it to the world.

This resolution once taken, she began the Memoir, with her usual despatch, on the very day she consented to undertake it; and from that moment, though the paper lay on her bureau, and she added something every day, yet so little did it appear to occupy her mind that she never cared for interruptions, nor refused listening to the countless applications and petitions made to her; nor did she appear to reserve a single moment of her time for the purpose of writing.

She committed to paper rapidly what her memory furnished, and scarcely ever erased or altered a sentence. In a few instances, when she recollected some circumstance which had escaped her memory in the proper place, she wrote it at the end of the volume, under the title of "omission," with a reference to the page where it ought to have appeared; but I do not think that such "omissions" exceeded seven or eight. This fact may account for some little inaccuracies with respect to dates. Her simplicity and love of truth were such, that she gave me more the idea of speaking and writing upon oath than any one I ever met with. Indeed, nothing could tempt her to embellish a fact, nor could she refrain from telling whatever was the truth.

She was so far from considering this memoir as a justification of her character, that had such a thing been suggested, I am convinced she would

have laid down her pen, proudly scornful of the humiliation.

Her conception, indeed, of her own character was such, that she felt her simple assertion of any fact was quite sufficient evidence of the truth.

When she had got the start of me several pages, I began to copy what she wrote, and she used sometimes to take the pen out of my hand, and write a line or two herself. In this way the memoir proceeded; she took it with her when we went for the winter to Moscow, and proceeded with it in the same manner. I think it was completed in about two years.

We passed this winter pretty much in the style of the former one. The next summer a circumstance occurred which was to me an event of great importance.

At the period when all English travellers were made prisoners in France, I was under much apprehension for the safety of my eldest sister, who had been several months on the Continent, making an excursion with some of her friends. It suddenly struck the princess that if my sister could join certain relations of hers who were then in Paris, on the eve of returning to Moscow, she might, under their escort, ensure her safety, and by extending her journey a little, pass through Russia to England in perfect security. The delight which it would give me to see her was so active a stimulus to the dear princess's anxiety upon this occasion, that she

wrote instantly to her friends in Paris; and in the meantime my sister became so frequently the theme of conversation, and we had built so many airy castles for her to inhabit, that when letters came announcing her actual arrival in England, we felt a species of disappointment amounting almost to regret, which we were at first ashamed of, and then thought so natural, that the princess resolved to turn it to good account. She declared there was no reason why we should be deprived of our visitor, because she happened to escape from France without our assistance; that a voyage from London to St. Petersburg was a mere trifle; and that after one year spent with her family, it would be highly proper that she should finish her travels by a northern tour, and a visit to the "Northern Bear," —as she frequently called herself.

She accordingly wrote to my father and mother, and we negotiated the matter with so much spirit, and found my sister so charmed with the plan, that everything was arranged without difficulty, and in July, 1805, she arrived at Petersburg.

The princess wished her to be presented at court before she came to Moscow, (a ceremony which delayed her a little,) and only regretted that her own health would not admit of her making a journey to Petersburg to meet her, and present me to the two empresses, in order to excite in their imperial majesties some personal interest in one for whom she intended to solicit their countenance and pro-

tection, in case her own death should deprive me of hers.

Not being able to accomplish this, she wrote to their imperial majesties, and obtained the promises she wished for, in very gracious letters from each, which I now possess. Her solicitude on this point was prompted by a private motive, of which I was at that time in total ignorance.

Happy in the unabating affection of the princess, who always called me by the endearing name of her child, and whose versatile mind made her at once the mother, sister, friend, and companion, of one she loved so dearly, I felt no care but that which she imposed, making me responsible for my sister's happiness, and giving the "traveller" a favourable impression of "our country," as good patriots should do.

Mademoiselle Istlainoff lent her aid to this; she admired and loved my sister with enthusiasm; and the winter passed away, varied by amusements and incidents, both instructive and pleasant; for as my sister had mingled so much more than myself in the pleasures of society, and as I had by that time gone through the usual course of Moscow gaieties, we confined ourselves to the national differences which mark the Russians, more than we had done before her arrival,—their feasts, ceremonies, and various peculiarities,—their introduction of gypsies and slaves, to sing and dance at splendid fêtes, in their wild but beautiful manner.

One day we dined at a tavern, where the hostess, arrayed in her singular costume, with a head-dress composed of pearls, and large diamond rings sparkling on her dirty hands, presided at the head of her table. Every dish was of Russian composition and cookery, and every circumstance was national. As this is never to be met with amongst the higher circles, unmixed with foreign refinements, the entertainment, to us, was peculiarly gratifying.

Another day we feasted with a Tartar prince; another, with a sectarian, who served, but would not eat with us; he was a Roscolnick, and explained some of their extraordinary tenets and usages.

Upon another occasion, Platoff, the high-spirited Cossack general, who is now distinguishing himself so nobly against the French, at the princess's request permitted one of his regiments to act a sham battle for us, that we might witness their very singular manner of making war and taking prisoners.

In summer, we made a very pleasant excursion with the princess, to visit several of her friends in the neighbourhood of Moscow. Amongst them was Count Ostrowman, who celebrated his name's-day with eastern magnificence, and a great variety of national amusements; after which we made a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Demetrius of Rostoff, the patron saint of the Worontzow family; visiting on our way the splendid convent and treasures at Troitz, (the Loretto of Russia,) and likewise Perisloff, a pretty town, situated on a beautiful lake of

the same name, where Peter the Great first ventured in a boat on the water, and then built one, which is still preserved with care, as a curiosity; and where he formed that taste which led to the foundation of St. Petersburg, and fostered his ambition for maritime fame. Upon this occasion, as well as during every other journey that I made with the princess, her name carried with it so high a degree of credit and importance, that she no sooner arrived at any town than the seneschal, or principal authorities of the place, immediately came to wait upon her, to offer their services and testify their respect.

Before we entered any house at Rostoff, we went to the cathedral, where service was being performed, and where the massive silver tomb of St. Demetrius, in which his body is supposed to be embalmed, forms a principal object. The princess went immediately within the railing and performed her devotions, kissed the saint, and went through other observances, whilst every eye in the church was fixed upon her. No wonder! There was something so very singular in her manners upon every occasion, that she could not fail to attract attention. There was a sincerity which marked her countenance so strongly, that her manner was often *naïf* as a child's. I know but one way to describe her, and that is by saying that she united every characteristic of every period of life, from infancy to old age, and she was so truly each of these at

different moments, that *schoolboy*, *lover*, *soldier*, *statesman*, &c., seemed each by turns the only feature of her enthusiastic being.

If, indeed, she treated men as boys, which was sometimes the case, or as dogs, if they did not please her, she just as frequently treated children as men and women, expecting the same intelligence, and understanding, and pursuits in them which occupied her own thoughts, and putting her own mind into instant competition with theirs. During the time when she was extracting as it were the spirit of a visitor,—which she did with as much ardour, and as *naturally*, as a distilling machine extracts the essence of vegetables,—age, sex, or condition were of no consequence; all was good for the still, and every power of her mind was at work. But alas! she was seldom occupied more than three minutes and a half, that time being ample for the purpose in hand.

This quality of the princess resembles one which is ascribed to Peter the First. He is said to have questioned all ranks and descriptions of persons with singleness of aim and energy, and thus to have caught flying very precious information and great variety of ideas.

The princess was, in all her ways, simplicity personified. With regard to dress, she had scarcely an idea what a love of it meant. Indeed, her ideas and conversation on this subject were so comically original, that she was almost like a native of Kamschat-

ska when she talked of fashions; and when she bought bargains, as it is called, it was droll, and sometimes vexatious, to see the first woman of the empire, distinguished for her understanding, duped by every bearded rogue who chose to dispose of his trash, puffing it off as fine merchandize.

There was one subject, however, connected with dress on which she had a very defined and very indignant feeling,—the custom of appearing in borrowed ornaments,—one which was so common in Moscow, that, like a much worse habit universal amongst the men, that of borrowing money, it caused no feeling of shame whatever.

Not so with the dear princess, who made it her pride not to have a debt in the world; and being too good a patriot to be insensible to anything like a national scandal, always spoke out on this vice of borrowing, and often made the guilty tremble by her mere presence. The effect it once produced on a lady conscious of delinquency in the minor article of borrowed ornaments, I will endeavour to describe, even at the risk of rather a long story, which I do not well know how to curtail.

Madame N—— was decked out one evening for a grand assembly by Princess Galitzin, who ornamented her into a perfect jeweller's shop. She had bandeaux of diamonds, two combs of diamonds, and a sort of crown of diamonds on her head. Her earrings of diamonds were magnificent; and on her neck she had chains of diamonds and strings

of pearls. There were brooches also of rubies, emeralds, and diamonds,—one a solitaire worth two thousand pounds; and a girdle of diamonds fastened with a precious stone, almost as big as a hen's egg, set in diamonds. Her white figured satin robe was decorated with festoons of artificial flowers.

Never shall I forget her appearance under these gaudy trappings. There was in her countenance a mixture of childish, innocent joy at being so fine, controlled by the most undisguised terror of the princess: and these mixed sensations agitated her to such a degree, that the crimson of her cheeks vied with the brightest ruby she wore, or the full-blown rose of her festoons.

Her toilet had taken up so much time that she arrived late—another sin in the princess's eyes; and the first object on entering which struck her dismayed senses was the princess immediately before her at a card table, playing at Boston with three other grandees. She approached the princess and kissed her hand; hers was in turn kissed by the three gentlemen; and though each knew perfectly well that she was a daw in borrowed plumes, yet such a blaze of diamonds awed them; and never, as she assured me, did she receive such submissive compliments in her life as from one of them on that occasion, a rich and great relation, who usually passed her by unnoticed.

This fiery ordeal over, she rushed into another room, where I was with the young people, and

flinging herself into my arms, with the utmost *naïveté* and earnestness of manner implored me to protect her, if the princess should attack her dress; for "*ma bonne amie, ma chère Mavra Romanovna,** I shall die of confusion if she speaks to me; and indeed it is not my fault, it is all the goodness of Princess Galitzin, who has put these things upon me."

In the mean time, every eye was fixed on so radiant a personage, who, having no jewels of her own, had always hitherto appeared dressed with simplicity, and now blazed upon the multitude as a new sun on the horizon. I promised not to quit her during the evening; and I may thank her for passing it most amusingly. Every one came to look at her; and she shewed herself to be admired with as much innocence as Mashinka† shews her new shoes.

All was fair sailing till towards supper time, when fear of the princess again renewed itself to her imagination. She now began to form a variety of plans, figured to herself innumerable terrors, was convinced that her evil genius would place her opposite to the princess, and that she should be undone; in a word, if ever creature suffered for the folly of being fine, she was the person.

And now a fresh source of alarm succeeded, for an unlucky pin falling out, loosened the tiara, and there was danger of dropping some of the jewels.

* My Russian name.

† A beautiful little child of a slave in the family.

She kept her head, therefore, like one in the pillory, which could neither turn to the right hand nor to the left.

As the time of supper approached we quitted the ball-room, and passing into another chamber, I began to feel a little cold, and asked for my shawl. The word was like a beam of light to her soul. "Thanks, my dear, kind friend, for inspiring me with such an idea;" and throwing up her eyes with devout gratitude, and making three signs of the cross, "Now," said she, "I'm in safety; I'll cover myself in a large shawl, if I am placed opposite to *my dear aunt;* I'll not eat a morsel, for fear of shewing my bracelets and rings, or some of these chains of diamonds; but if I am happy enough to be at a distance from her, you know I can throw off my shawl and shew myself."

The tears were in her eyes from the idea of misery relieved, and triumph renewed; when, in the fervour of bowing her head and crossing herself, the loosened tiara moved a little, and plunged her into renewed anguish. "No, it is impossible," said she; "this crown, these bandeaux, cannot be hid; I have nothing for it but to go home; yet, my dear friend, I have a great mind to eat my supper; and I know not what measure to pursue."

I persuaded her we should escape all observation by sitting at the same side of the table as the princess, but much lower, and that she might eat her supper in peace. Supper was announced. We did as I pro-

posed, having followed the princess at a distance and watched her movements; when lo! the princess seated herself at the head of the table, and thus had a view in perspective of all the company; and what was worse, searching me out, she could not fail remarking my brilliant neighbour. A change of dishes, however, happily raising a sort of screen between us, Madame N—— then breathed, and threw off her shawl; but the moment supper was ended she vanished. On reaching home, she did not fail to rouse M. N—— from his slumbers, who, being unwell, had not presented himself at the party, and for another moment, or rather for the only moment of the evening, she enjoyed the satisfaction of being magnificent without terror.

I have said, that arriving late at places was a sin in the princess's eyes. Her own practice indeed was so opposite, that no experience could ever cure her of appearing at every ball she went to before the candles were well lit; and as she was the first personage wherever she went at Moscow, this was sure to set the whole house in confusion,—master, mistress, children, and servants, all running *helter skelter;* some to finish their toilets; the father of the family, scarcely awake from his evening nap, hastening to meet her at the outer door.

I remember an anecdote told by her niece, Baroness Hogguer, when, as Mlle. Paliansky, she was once chaperoned by the princess to a grand court party at St. Petersburg. The young lady was obliged to be ready at the time appointed

by the princess; but the hair-dresser had disappointed her. The princess was all impatience, the niece all distress though well aware they would be an hour or two before the rest of the company. At length, having hurried on her dress, she got into the carriage, when the princess ordered the coachman to drive with all speed to the summer palace. They soon reached it; not a single equipage disputed the passage; they wandered through the rooms; the servants were dusting the chairs and tables. A little fatigued with this sort of pastime, the princess bethought herself that a walk in the garden would be very *refreshing*. Mlle. P—— did not dare to deny it; and, victim-like, followed her aunt, who set seriously to walking for the good of their health, till the powder and curl were blown out of Mlle. P——'s hair, and herself somewhat out of humour for the evening's enjoyment, which did not begin for more than an hour after their arrival at the palace.

But to return from this long digression (which, as the princess is the subject of it, will, I trust, be pardoned) to the pilgrimage of which I was speaking, and to more serious matter concerning myself which follows it.

This journey was peculiarly interesting to us; and, though making a pilgrimage was only going a great way to bow down to holy bones covered with the offerings of sinful mortals,—ceremonies which we saw daily at Moscow,—yet the country through which we travelled was so lovely, and so

many pleasant circumstances enlivened our way, that we returned to Moscow in the highest spirits.

During our stay there, I called one day upon an English lady, a friend of mine, and from her I learned, with a degree of surprise which for a long time destroyed every painful sensation, by rendering me incredulous,—that I had become the subject of universal comment at Moscow; that I was represented as a person devoid of all feeling and principle, and who employed all the influence I possessed over the mind of the princess, in widening the unhappy disunion between her and her children, for the vilest of purposes. In a word, calumny could not use language more bitter, nor falsehood colour it more darkly, than what I thus discovered to have been employed by * * * * * * to excite the strongest sensation of sympathy for herself, and of detestation of my imputed crimes.

When astonishment and horror suffered me to collect my thoughts, I questioned my friend as to the degree of belief which such stories had acquired. She replied to my question by asking whether it was possible that I could be ignorant that, from the first winter I had been in Moscow, * * * * * * had written to her partisans, and put into circulation reports concerning me, the nature of which was at once flattering and disadvantageous, but peculiarly calculated to create enemies around me.

The princess's partiality, which possibly led her to express a wish that I could be indeed her daugh-

ter, had been misconstrued into an avowed determination on her part that it should be so, through the means of a divorce, and an ecclesiastical dispensation which her son might obtain; whilst I was described as having entered into her views, and that it was to be feared his unhappy wife was to be the innocent victim of my arts and my ambition.

That Prince Daschkaw had in reality for years withstood overtures of such a nature (where the objects proposed as inducements to him to sacrifice both feeling and principle in order to form a new alliance held forth every possible allurement) was a matter well known but overlooked; and as time and events had brought truth to light on that subject, the falsehood of any new accusation of this nature, either as affecting the princess, her son, or myself, might have been sufficiently apparent, yet it was now brought forward with fresh energy, as the most popular groundwork for the present attack of my enemy upon my character. I was, in my turn, thought to be a sorceress, whose spells were as powerful at they were wicked, since they could overcome obstacles so sacred and so nearly insurmountable.

I was indeed totally ignorant of the existence of such reports; and so clearly did my friend read this in my countenance, that she half repented having told me, and declared she should severely reproach herself for destroying my repose of mind, did she not feel it was a duty of friendship to give me an

opportunity of silencing such reports by a fair and simple exposure of their falsehood.

To sum up the black list of my crimes, I was accused of being the sole cause of a cruel misunderstanding then existing between the princess and her son, which had taken place some months before the period I mention, from circumstances entirely foreign to the point in question, but which there is no occasion to disclose. My object (it was said) was to revenge the failure of my first scheme.

New light broke in upon me at every word I heard. I was amazed and struck with horror at the depth of the snare, and the plausibility of the well-woven story.

I communicated everything to my sister, whose penetrating mind, awakened by her affection, saw danger menacing me in a thousand forms. My enemy was a fearful one; and as soon as the first discovery was made, a thousand proofs of her treachery and malice followed, which people had forborne to mention until then, from the princess's care to keep from us the knowledge of what she was certain must give us pain. This she was enabled to do the more easily from my sister's total ignorance of the Russian language, and my knowing it very imperfectly.

Amongst other things, * * * * * * declared we were persons who might be dangerous to the state, and that government would do well to keep a watchful eye upon us. As the two nations were

beginning just then to feel a mutual jealousy, and as the princess's love of England and hatred of France were notorious, this insinuation was far from harmless. We wished to open our hearts to our dear maternal friend, and seek counsel from her in circumstances so agonizing and so new; but delicacy towards her closed our lips.

This restraint did not, however, last long; an accident led to the disclosure of the princess's perfect knowledge of all; and we found that Moscow was actually divided into two parties, of which the princess and my cause were at the head of one, and * * * * * * and her fabrication at the head of the other.

The face of everything was now changed. To know myself suspected of such baseness, covered me with shame and indignation; and though I spoke on the subject with all the boldness of innocence, yet I was not accustomed to the language of self-justification, and I spurned at the necessity of employing it. I told all my feelings to the princess, and implored her to suffer me to return home; as, however much I might despise calumny, it became a crime to stay where I was made the innocent cause of family discord—a fact which was rendered but too true, by the resolution of my enemy to make it such.

In reply to the princess's objections, I said there was but one way of justifying me to my own satisfaction, and ensuring my stay,—which was, a recon-

ciliation with her son and daughter. No power could induce her to accede to this. Many a heart-rending conversation, and many a letter, passed between us, on this cruel subject, and at last she announced her unalterable resolution of accompanying me if I resolved to go, and of ending her days in England. She was of too decided a character for me to doubt her sincerity on this point. Shocked at the bare suggestion of her abandoning family, friends, country, and exposing herself to the dangers of such a journey and voyage, I did not hesitate to relinquish an intention formed from the apparent necessity of the case, deeply as I lamented a separation from one whom I so tenderly loved. My sister, too, became less averse to my remaining, in the hope that, if the reconciliation so much desired could not be brought about, I might be permitted to accompany her home the following summer, when she was positively to return, after having prolonged her stay in Russia to a second year.

I ought to acknowledge a source of comfort during these painful circumstances, which I derived from the firm friendship of many of Princess Daschkaw's family; but that of her niece, Countess Bouttourlin, is associated with too many grateful recollections not to be particularly alluded to. She was a beautiful and most attractive person. Her husband was a man of highly cultivated mind, of superior talents, and brilliant conversation; but gifted as they both were to adorn society, they de-

voted themselves to the education of two children,—a son and a daughter,—and lived in a state of refined and luxurious retirement, unlike any other family in Moscow. They invited me to their house repeatedly, and I went sometimes. The subject of my embarrassments was often discussed; and to say that both did ample justice to my feelings and conduct, is conveying but a faint idea of the warmth and affection with which they soothed and cheered me, or of the delightful resource which I always felt in their society.

We now returned to Troitskoe; but short as our absence had been, every object appeared blighted by that spirit of malevolence which had gone forth. Again and again the subject of reconciliation was renewed; but as the princess acted on her own conception of duty, I only proved my imperfect knowledge of her character when I flattered myself that I could persuade her to act contrary to it, or to adopt my views on some points where we happened to differ.

Winter again approached, and we returned to Moscow. * * * * was still there; party ran high, and matters were truly uncomfortable. In the same town with her son and daughter, the princess did not see either of them. In private societies there was no probability of their meeting; in public it might be otherwise, and the consequence must have been painful.

Such was the state of things when, early in the

month of January, what were the feelings of anguish and despair with which the dear unhappy princess was doomed to hear that her son lay in a fever, at the point of death, after having been many days in a state of insensibility, incapable of knowing any one around him. This account was immediately followed by another, that he had breathed his last!

I will not attempt to convey any adequate idea of the scenes which followed this direful event; some of them, indeed, connected with the conduct of others, which aggravated to the highest degree my unhappy friend's sufferings, but which I am not here called upon to expose.

According to the custom of the Greek church, masses for the repose of Prince Daschkaw's soul filled the hall with low funeral chants, and priests, in their sable robes, with yellow tapers, flung the incense of death through the half-lighted apartments.

Silence or low whisperings prevailed; and the crowd of relatives and friends who came to the house to testify their sympathy or respect, were all dressed in deep mourning. The princess's apartments were filled with notaries, trustees, witnesses, and all the melancholy indications of what was then occupying her mind, the act of altering her will, and the settlement of all her worldly concerns, contemplating what she believed the approach of her own release from life with calm reliance on the mercies of Providence.

Tranquil with respect to my safety, having re-

ceived assurance of the two empresses' protection, one of her first cares was for the forlorn state of Prince Daschkaw's widow. The law of Russia leaves a wife full power over whatever fortune she brings in marriage, both during her husband's lifetime and in case of his death; added to which, she is entitled to a portion of his property if he dies intestate. But the Princess Anne having had no fortune, and the prince dying without a will, she was reduced to the very small provision made by law; and as no parent can inherit from a child, his sister became sole proprietress of all his estates and wealth.

No sooner had the princess determined on becoming her protectress, than she prevailed upon two of her near relations (Countess E. Worontzow and Madame Noroff) to go to her retirement and conduct her to Moscow. This summons soon brought them together, and the first interview between the princess and her unhappy daughter-in-law (creatures who had caused each other many a bitter pang for the long period of twenty successive years) was hallowed by the mysterious influence of the being whom both adored while living, and who united them to each other only because he was now lost to them both for ever.

The Princess Anne became, of course, an object of the greatest interest and attention amongst us all; her situation excited our warmest sympathy. Each was anxious to contribute to her happiness in every possible way; and I soon acquired her confi-

dence so entirely, that she told me how much uneasiness I had occasioned her from the reports which I have already mentioned, but that I had friends who did justice to my principles, so that she had anticipated my acquaintance with more pleasure than pain. Besides, the source from whence the calumny flowed was well known to her; for its poisonous influence had destroyed her domestic happiness very early in life. * * * * * had long been her bitter enemy; and she did not hesitate to declare that to that influence alone she attributed the prince's estrangement from her society, and her consequently melancholy existence—a prey to neglect and a thousand mortifications.

The warm concern which I felt in her happiness, and my gratitude for the confidence she reposed in my zeal for her welfare, were links of mutual kindness which united us closely; and on my quitting Russia I received a letter from her, in which she told me she deplored, in my departure, the loss of her only sincere friend and firm supporter in the good opinion of her mother-in-law.

Nothing could be more interesting than the *circumstances* in which the Princess Anne was placed; yet truth compels me to confess that nobody so situated could have been less interesting. Her character had acquired its full maturity at fourteen or fifteen years of age; and when she lost the bloom of youth, with all its nameless graces, she lost everything that could attract; yet she was harmless, and

so eager to please, (especially the princess,) that her attentions were teazing, and often out of place.

The conduct of the princess towards her was uniformly kind. It became necessary to employ lawyers to manage her affairs: business went on very slowly, and in the meantime the princess purchased for her a very elegant house, and defrayed all her expenses. These events occupied the princess so much that she could not go to Troitskoe at her accustomed time; and before the Princess Anne's affairs were in any degree arranged, the period of my sister's necessary departure for Ireland arrived.

Our acquaintance with the Princess Anne had brought to light traits of the character of * * * *, which increased my sister's uneasiness at my remaining in Russia almost to agony; nor was it lessened by a circumstance which occurred amongst a succession of daily horrors and annoyances of various kinds. This circumstance I must unavoidably abstain from relating, from motives of delicacy which I cannot overcome. * * * *

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The affair was passed over in silence; but it sank deeply into my sister's mind, though she felt as strongly as I did the absolute impossibility of my even suggesting a thought of quitting the princess at such a time; and all that she could even venture to ask was a promise that my eldest brother might be permitted to go over the following spring, and conduct me home to spend one year with my family,

after so long an absence from them. This promise was given, and I have reason to think the princess had a secret intention of revisiting England herself, if the weak state of her health could permit her to do so; but she was not in a situation to undertake a long journey, and even a favourite wish of conducting my sister to Riga, and shewing us that part of the country, she was obliged to relinquish. She was determined, however, to escort her part of the way towards Petersburg, and on the 4th of July, 1807, our whole party, including the Princess Anne and her attendants, set out for that purpose.

We spent a day in a monastery near Moscow, and then proceeded to Klin. It was on the 7th of July that we separated from my sister and her party, who proceeded to Petersburg, and we, slowly and with melancholy, retraced our way back to Moscow. Yet she was infinitely the most to be pitied, as her imagination had but too much to feed itself with in absence, and to excite alarm for my safety, especially when, before many weeks had passed, peace was proclaimed between Russia and France—the probable forerunner of war between England and Russia, which the princess anticipated would throw difficulties in the way of my return, and even impede our regular correspondence. Thus rendered more and more uneasy, my sister scarcely felt herself justified in preserving the strict secrecy respecting * * * * which I imposed upon her before her departure, well knowing that I should be re-

called home by my father and mother had they suspected the truth.

I consider it a peculiar blessing that throughout all these transactions I never had one nervous fear; but I grieved for the anxiety which I occasioned my sister, and I dreaded lest, through the unguarded communications of her maid, every circumstance I wished to conceal should come to the knowledge of my family.

My sister sailed through the midst of the British fleet the very day before the bombardment of Copenhagen, and soon arrived in England. We remained several weeks longer in Moscow on the Princess Anne's account, and then went to Troitskoe, where the princess felt always the most at ease, and where her strength now became rapidly restored.

The declaration of war between England and Russia interrupted our short interval of domestic quiet, and the few letters I received from my sister betrayed the most painful anxiety on my account.

Visions of poison or banishment haunted her continually; and as the English were beginning to quit Russia as quickly as they could obtain passports, and the impossibility of my brother's coming for me being now established, my mind began to grow uneasy lest I should miss the proper opportunity of returning home, and by doing so, have reason to reproach myself keenly, not only for exposing myself to I knew not what danger in an enemy's country, but for the effect which it might produce

upon my friends at home. This idea tormented me day and night, but I wanted courage to mention it to the princess, and perhaps I should not have been equal to the task at all, had not the immediate departure of Colonel and Mrs. Pollen, with whom I was well acquainted, been mentioned to me. I then made a desperate effort, and found the grief of my beloved friend more than I could well support. She acknowledged, however, the urgency of the case; and our only consolation was my solemn promise of returning to her in the event of peace, unless she came to England,—a hope which she always cherished, though the state of the Continent, even more than that of her health, effectually prevented it at a period like the present.

I must pass over in silence scenes of inexpressible anguish. I wrote to Mrs. Pollen; and time being too precious to wait for her answer,—still more, every day being one of torture scarcely to be endured,—in order not to prolong such a species of lingering death, I fixed the day of my departure, or rather a happy necessity fixed it for me, as Colonel Laptoff, the brave and valued friend of the princess, was just then going with his bride to Petersburg, and the very act of consigning me to their care on the journey was a momentary alleviation of the dear princess's suffering. I secretly arranged with Mademoiselle Istlainoff that she should write to me, and that if the princess continued in the same state of misery, I would, at any

risk, come back. We mutually felt that it would be better to avoid taking leave; and with a bleeding heart I tore myself from her dear, dear presence, and quitted the house secretly, at the latter end of October, 1807, walking to a considerable distance from the house, that our carriage might not disturb her from a feverish slumber into which she had fallen. Again and again I made the affectionate-hearted Mademoiselle Istlainoff promise to write in a few days; and supported alone by the thought of acting rightly, I bade adieu to all those friends who had assembled for the melancholy purpose; and then, scarcely conscious of what was passing, I was lifted into my carriage.

On my arrival at Petersburg, I was received at the house of the Countess Irene Worontzow, the princess's near relation, where I learned that Colonel and Mrs. Pollen had that very morning set out with Lord Royston and several English travellers for Revel, that Mrs. Pollen had not received my letter, and that before I could quit Petersburg it would take more time than I was aware of for a British subject to obtain passports.

Preparations were immediately begun by Mr. Cavanaugh, an English merchant, and a sincere friend of mine, of whose kindness it is impossible for me to say too much. I told him all my distress about the princess, and the possibility there was of my receiving a letter which would take me back to Moscow; however, as he and Dr. Rogerson, and all

my friends, strongly recommended me to procure a passport at all events, I made the necessary applications; though, on finding that Mrs. Pollen was gone, I had no resource left but that of addressing myself to the minister of Sweden, who was not to quit Petersburg till the spring.

As the princess had written to Count Romantzoff, begging that he would assist me in every possible way, I requested an interview, announcing my intention of calling at his house for that purpose. I was received by his sister, a most polite old lady, with every mark of distinction, for the sake of the princess, whom she admired and respected. We were soon afterwards joined by her brother, the minister, whose excessively courtier-like manners and exaggerated expressions of kindness might have led me to suppose that he was totally absorbed in my affairs, and that he existed only to render me service. When I told him of my disappointment about Mrs. Pollen, he suggested the idea of the Swedish minister offering his services. I then asked him, by the princess's desire, whether he would recommend my soliciting an audience to take leave of their imperial majesties, not as a British subject, but as one under personal obligations for their goodness, which I mentioned. After pausing to reflect, he promised to lay my words at their imperial feet, and wait upon me to communicate the result. He entreated that I would consult him in any embarrassment I might feel on any sub-

ject, as if he were my near relation, declaring how much he felt honoured by the princess having given him an opportunity of being useful to me.

After having promised to send my passport, and to lay my case immediately before the emperor, who would doubtless make me an exception to the general rule respecting foreigners, he led me, cap in hand, through a long suite of splendid apartments and an endless train of servants, down to the very door of my carriage, pleased (in spite of reason) with the suavity of his manners.

I had learned that the Count Romantzoff had a nickname in Russ, which was a play upon the word *sugar;* but I was not aware of the excessive falseness of his character until after this visit, when finding that he did not wait on me as he had given me reason to expect, that no passport arrived without the usual forms, through imperial favour, and consequently that neither my interests nor his offers of service could in the slightest degree have occupied his attention, I expressed my surprise, and was then informed of what everybody except myself, both Russians and English, seemed to know so well,—of his absolute devotion to the French interest, and of the degree of credit to be attached to his promises!

So entirely French was this minister, that he wrote all his official orders in that language, and his secretaries translated them into Russ. It was in consequence of this that the first embargo laid

on English shipping to detain it "*for* four days" was by a mistake translated into the words "*in* four days." No sooner did the English hear this absurd ukase, than, guessing the truth, they spread the alarm, slipped their cables, and sailed away unmolested; whilst Count Romantzoff was, for once, writing an ukase in his mother tongue, in order to detain them as prisoners of war! This anecdote was told me by the very person who was sent from Petersburg to Cronstadt to warn the English of their impending fate; and he added, that two or three ships, whose captains would not go without their freights, were actually detained.

I received letters every day from my beloved princess, which drew from me many a bitter tear. Still, however, Mademoiselle Istlainoff's letter did not arrive, and I accepted the introduction of Baron Hogguer (ci-devant minister from Holland, who gave up his country when it gave up its freedom) to his friend Baron Steding, the Swedish minister. My visit to this delightful old man differed from that to Count Romantzoff in every respect. His house was plain, his establishment small, and he lived in much retirement, occasioned by the circumstances of the court which he represented, though the emperor esteemed him personally. Mild, dignified, and cheerful, his politeness was felt in its soothing and obliging effects. Without making any great professions, he gave me every reason to believe that he would feel real pleasure in

being useful. He expressed a high degree of respect for the princess. I found, however, that as he did not intend taking Madame Steding or his daughters on board the frigate which was to convey himself, I could have no possible claim to such an accommodation; and though he very good-naturedly proposed my accompanying them whenever the plan of their journey should be finally arranged, yet I felt the inconvenience this might occasion to so large a family under such circumstances, and I took my leave, resolved to wait for news from Moscow before I decided upon anything.

News came at length; and though Mlle. Istlainoff told me that the princess was rather better, yet, in the letter of my beloved princess to me, there was a degree of hope, which sprang from hearing of Mrs. Pollen's departure, and betrayed her into such expressions of her feelings, as made me reflect on the cruelty of not returning to Moscow, when I must necessarily remain several months longer in the country. Her expectations of peace were sanguine; and her determination of accompanying me if it happened in the spring, was fixed; indeed, few Russians imagined the war would last more than a year.

My resolution was now taken. I had gained some useful information while at Petersburg, and found that in the course of the following year it was probable that many English families would return home. The time I spent at Countess Woront-

zow's (which was nearly a month) was agreeable in every way. But I will not enter into any details of other occurrences at Petersburg. I made all possible haste to rejoin my beloved princess at Moscow, and she greeted my arrival with a most affecting proof of her attachment. She told me that after having inquired into the cases of different prisoners, she had that morning procured the release of five insolvent debtors from the prisons of Moscow, who had been confined for years, and that she had desired each of them should offer up a Te Deum, to celebrate the jubilee of her friend's return.

"This, my child," she added, "is a fête worthy of you, and worthy of your Russian mother; *I would not give nor ball nor concert upon the occasion, for I know to please you better.*" However, not contented with this, she gave the Princess Anne and Mademoiselle Istlainoff magnificent presents, and money to every servant in the house. To all this I must add one more characteristic trait: she took me into her sleeping room, opened a drawer, and shewed me a pair of my gloves, worn till the character of my hand was impressed upon them. These gloves I had accidentally left on her dressing table a few days before I quitted Moscow, and she had from that moment fondly treasured them up.

Her affection for me, her tenderness and attachment, were indeed unparalleled; and I sometimes think I may be considered ungrateful in ever

having quitted her. But in truth I was not; and much as I have disclosed, much remains, and ever must remain, buried within my own breast, to make my return to Moscow at that period a species of romantic folly which she alone could inspire, and my subsequent departure an act of duty to my parents, who had reposed in me such unbounded confidence, as well as of justice to myself as an accountable being.

Our time passed at Moscow without any very extraordinary incidents. The Princess Anne's affairs went forward without coming to a close, and were constant subjects of discussion. Two young ladies, relations of the princess, had become inmates of her house a short time previous to my journey to Petersburg. They were left orphans and nearly friendless, which was their only claim upon the princess, but one she seldom disallowed; the consequence was, she took them under her protection, so that a cheerful society always surrounded her when we remained at home; which became more our habit than formerly.

In the spring of 1808, the fearful catastrophe of the shipwreck which deprived Lord Royston and Colonel Pollen of life (with all its attendant circumstances of horror) was announced to us. Upon this occasion, my escape from being involved in that awful event was made the subject of general congratulation amongst my friends, and the princess hailed it as a peculiar interposition of Providence in

my behalf. My own feelings were those of deep gratitude for my escape, and humiliation at all those proud congratulations, which only made me feel still more strongly what an insignificant being I was, compared with those whose virtues, talents, and opening promise, were buried in a moment in one watery grave! I speak particularly of Lord Royston, just entering into the active scenes of life, and destined to be a soldier or a statesman. In any situation he must have been an honour to his country; and in listening to circumstances of his conduct, which served to shew the man, I have felt as if England would reckon him amongst her heroes, and owe to him a day of glory! I was proud to call him my countryman, though I never beheld him more than once; but there are times and circumstances when to be *good* and *great* is to confer obligation upon every one who feels a sentiment of patriotism; and even in an enemy's country, Lord Royston inspired one universal feeling, that of deep and just regret for his untimely fate.

All correspondence with England was now at an end; and though I sent letters in every possible way, yet as I received no answers, I had reason to suppose that my family was in equal ignorance respecting me. This, added to an entanglement of circumstances which I have already alluded to, made me often reproach myself for not having remained in Petersburg, and spared my beloved

princess, as well as myself, a second parting scene, which I now perceived was inevitable.

The chances of peace became weaker and weaker; and years might elapse and find me still a voluntary prisoner. I might never see my father again, nor my mother, whose health had begun to decline; and uneasiness on my account might embitter their days, whilst I was quite certain with respect to my sister's misery. These ideas left me no repose; and, on the other hand, to separate from the princess was anguish. Thus agitated, no wonder that my spirits sank, and my health was giving way. The princess perceived it; but not having courage any more than myself to talk of separating, she arranged a little journey to Kalouga for change of scene, and we understood each other without venturing to express our mutual fears.

At length, during the last week in August, a letter came to me from a friend in Petersburg, announcing the almost immediate departure of a family of my acquaintance, in the very last ship that was to quit Russia for the season. It was therefore necessary for me to decide upon speaking then or never. I shewed the letter, and the princess, with tears, acknowledged that it was what she expected would happen, because she felt that it ought.

The scenes of the preceding year now spread their gloom on every circumstance; yet, in one respect it was rather better,—we both felt that impe-

rious necessity dictated the measure, and the fluctuations of doubt were at an end.

I took with me my own maid, who was a Russian, the princess's house-steward, and a footman; and my departure differed from the former in nothing but an agonizing embrace and a fervent blessing, which I received as if she felt it would be indeed the last.

I crept into her room an hour after this, as she slept with the smiling placid expression of infancy on her countenance—an expression which I never saw in any old person but herself. I gazed upon her dear face till almost blinded by my tears; and quitted her, never to see her more in this world!

I took up my abode again at the Countess Worontzow's; but though I could say much of her kindness, and the very agreeable manner in which she lives, as well as of the society which frequents her house, and much of her beautiful sister, the Princess Galitzin, whose conversation particularly delighted me, yet I must pass over all this, and all the delays and annoyances attending the procuring my passport,—notwithstanding the princess's particular application to Prince Kourakin, then minister for foreign affairs,—and proceed at once to the last week of my stay in Russia.

Matters appeared to be going on prosperously, when I found, to my infinite mortification, that the family which I had intended to join was absolutely

forced to remain in Russia by the alarming illness of one of them. I now indeed was involved in troubles. To return to Moscow after all that had passed would have been barbarous; to go alone to England, impossible; and I could not obtain a passport for my poor, faithful Russian maid to accompany me. The fleet now preparing to sail was, I found, American; and after their departure, every chance of a passage was at an end. My friends all interested themselves,—some in inquiries as to the means of going, others in their endeavours to hasten the passport, which I thought Prince Kourakin would never give. The emperor was then absent; and whether that circumstance retarded public business I cannot say, but the delays were most disheartening, at a season when delay might expose one to fearful storms in the Baltic.

At last I was told with great triumph, by Dr. Rogerson and Mr. Cavanaugh, that Mr. John Haliday, brother to the gentleman with whom I travelled first to Moscow, and with whom I had been acquainted from my first arrival, was going to rejoin his wife and family in England, and that if I would accept his protection, he would gladly undertake to escort me.

This Mr. Haliday was one of the passengers on board the ship when Lord Royston and Colonel Pollen were drowned, and was the only gentleman out of twenty-six or twenty-seven who escaped.

I was too happy to hear of his offer to hesitate

in accepting it, and I was now only anxious to obtain my passport, which had every day some new form to go through: at length I received it.

During all this time, Mr. Cavanaugh was my kind and active friend; every preparation was made, and on the 19th of October I was to quit Petersburg and repair to Cronstadt, where the shipping lay;—when, the very evening before my departure, he called on me and told me I must exert my courage, as he was going to mention a most singular and embarrassing occurrence. He said that a friend of his, an official person, had called on him three times that morning while he was out; and being struck by the perseverance of his visits, he had written him a note, which was followed by another call on the part of the gentleman, who had only just quitted him. After informing Mr. C—— that, as he understood him to be Miss W.'s friend, he could not resist cautioning him that, although her passport was given to her, yet, as government had received intelligence that she was taking papers of consequence out of the country, three officers had been appointed to be ready to follow her,—one to the port of Cronstadt, the second to Narva, and the third to Riga, with power to stop her at whichever port she purposed sailing from, and there to examine in the minutest manner all her baggage; that government had a very suspicious eye upon her; and that, as his friend, he

recommended him not to escort her any part of the way, nor appear interested about her.

Papers I certainly had, for I had the princess's memoir in her own handwriting, copies of the correspondence between her and Catherine the Second, besides some other papers, and several letters from different individuals in Russia to their friends in England.

I was obliged to unpack a trunk to get at these; and Mr. Cavanaugh made them up into a separate packet, which he sent off to the ship on board of which I had taken a passage, desiring that it might be put into one of the sailor's chests.

I reserved the letters in my writing-case, to send back, or destroy, or open, according to circumstances.

I then glanced my eyes over the little collection of private papers which I had, and left them to their fate, thinking them perfectly harmless. Amongst these was the collection of French exercises corrected by the princess, which I have already mentioned, and amongst them *one* which, for want of something better to write about, told of a start which a little mouse had given me, by running up the sleeve of my gown, when I took it by the tail to avoid treading on it. At the end of this note, which was longer than usual, the princess had complimented me on my improvement in writing; but said that, in sparing the life of the little mouse,

I had exercised a false species of mercy, as the race multiplied so rapidly that it was become a serious evil, &c. My reason for noticing this trifling circumstance will be seen hereafter.

This packet filled up one corner of a very small red work-trunk, which contained my ornaments, and nothing else besides.

These little arrangements being made, my heavy baggage was all sent off by water, as Mr. Cavanaugh had previously directed; and conscious of having nothing to fear, I returned to a large party at Madame de Worontzow's. On the following day I bade her adieu, and slept that night at Oraminbaum.

Early the next morning, as we were preparing to cross over to Cronstadt, while I was gazing at the palace, my maid remarked a gentleman who appeared to watch our movements, and as we stepped into the boat this same stranger was ready to offer his assistance.

In the course of the passage, he contrived to address me in French, in Italian, and in English, sometimes deploring the war, and at others, praising my country,—till the roughness of the water made me perfectly insensible to all his observations.

I lost sight of my companion on landing, which was early enough to allow of my sharing Mr. Haliday's breakfast, who had arrived the day before, and was waiting for me. In the course of the morning, Mr. Cavanaugh came, and we began to think it a false alarm on the part of his friend, as all my

baggage was already passed through the custom-house, and had the government seals affixed to it. He did not quit us till four o'clock, and then went away delighted at the idea that all was quiet. In the evening, however, the English agent came, pale and terrified, to demand, in the name of M. de Kaisaroff, Conseiller de la Cour, a small red trunk, missing from amongst the baggage which he had seen with me in the morning. The poor man described the whole town to be in a state of consternation, as the gentleman seemed to have great power, and that he had taken off the government seals from all my trunks, setting aside the authority of the collector of the custom-house entirely. Of course I sent the little trunk, and awaited my fate very patiently. It was returned to me in three hours, with a message to say that M. de Kaisaroff would request to have it again in the evening.

During several following mornings, my clothes and baggage in the custom-house were ransacked without mercy; and as I happened to have a good many papers and letters, the collection of five years, all of which he was upon oath to read, as well as my manuscript music, and translations of Russian songs, and twenty little follies, into a language which he understood but imperfectly, he had a far more troublesome undertaking, and one less profitable, than he could have anticipated.

I was resolved not to let him suppose that I felt alarmed, and I therefore invited him to come and

visit me, and afterwards to dine at a species of table-d'hôte which the English had there. He came of course, and I immediately spoke to him in the most fearless manner of what was going forward, naming him my *chambellan de service*, and *confident malgré moi*. I never could exactly discover whether he was my friend or my enemy; he certainly was the first in manner, and, as far as I could judge, in conduct; but I was told otherwise, and particularly that he had recommended all the captains to refuse me a passage on board their ships. In truth, I became rather a dangerous cargo; for the poor captain who had engaged to take Mr. Haliday and myself had soon a special visit to his ship, where, in searching for papers, they found some sailors concealed, and this was near bringing him into a very serious dilemma. The captain, however, was a most kind, good-natured creature, and took so warmly to heart the idea of a young lady being under arrest, that he swore, with the gallantry of a true-born tar, that he would hazard his own life rather than leave her amongst barbarians, who had the heart to behave in so unmanly a way.

By a singular degree of good fortune, the Memoir, which actually was on board, escaped detection; however, as a second visit was expected, it became necessary for the captain's safety to destroy it, or bring it on shore.

I gave him permission to do whichever he found

requisite, warning him that I preferred, of course, the latter alternative. He accordingly went on board before daylight, put the parcel under his large wrapping coat, and ordered his boat to return; when, at the very moment he was about to descend the ship's side, a custom-house barge arrived with eleven men on board, who sprang into the ship and continued as guards in possession of her from that instant until she set sail. The captain remained a moment longer, ordering for their refreshment some London porter, and whilst they were drinking it, jumped into his boat, to which he had given a signal, and rowed to shore, where he delivered to me the parcel with an air of the most good-natured triumph.

That day I had a conference with M. de Kaissaroff, who told me, in reply to the questions which I asked him, that as yet he had not found anything to justify much alarm; that it was true government supposed me the bearer of important secrets to England, and that my political connexions were well known; that from amongst my papers he had selected my music, not knowing exactly whether it was not a cypher, to which I had the key; and likewise a certain paper, which he feared he should be obliged to lay before the government, for his imperial majesty to decide upon; that in the meantime he would order an embargo on any ship I chose to name to secure my conveyance to England, and the rest might depart in peace.

I inquired what the paper was, and whether any person besides myself was involved? He said, certainly, Princess Daschkaw was supposed to guide me in all those matters, but that he hoped nothing of consequence would be the result; and at all events he was persuaded that I had nothing to fear. I now inquired with extreme alarm what the mysterious paper was; and I felt that, if the dear princess were to get into any scrape by my imprudence, I should be wretched for life; when lo, and behold! out crept the little mouse!

I burst into a fit of laughter, and told him, without a moment's reflection, that he deserved to be left in his error, to punish him for the fright he had given me; for that as surely as he took that paper back, to lay it seriously before the senate, he would become the jest of all Petersburg!

He looked dismayed in his turn; and I then said that, as he had been polite and even good-natured in his conduct, I would tell him the simple fact; and that as for my music, I could take an oath there was as much mystery in it as in the mouse, and no more.

I then told him what I have already related; and though M. le Conseiller thought proper to preserve an important air, and support his discernment at the expense of his candour, still I am convinced he was persuaded of the truth, and alarmed at the idea of becoming a subject of ridicule; for he closed the affair by promising to read the paper a fourth

time, and reflect on it more carefully. He spoke, however, of a letter which he had found without a signature, which he attributed to quite a different person from the one who wrote it, and he gave it an air of importance by placing it in a political point of view.

I explained this mystery likewise; but not without a remark on the facility which he had shewn in so altering the meaning of things that guilt might be extracted from the most harmless language, and how much I felt hurt at the species of examination to which I had been subjected. I said I pitied him for being made the involuntary instrument of what could not fail to be painful to any man of delicacy or feeling, and therefore my anger was not personal; that as for detaining any unfortunate captain an hour, I could not answer it to my conscience to do so, particularly at so advanced a season; and that as for quitting the country while the princess was in the remotest degree involved, it was what I should certainly never think of; therefore, all I requested was, that he would make up his mind as to my guilt or innocence, for that delay was one of the worst things that could happen.

I likewise spoke of the jailer who was seated, morning, noon, and night, opposite to my bedchamber, whom I had seen, but not thought about, till my maid told me that my servants were exceedingly indignant at learning amongst their associates that he was placed there to guard me as a

sort of prisoner, and to watch those who went in and out of my apartment. If the poor creature indeed did so, he must have done it by dreaming that all was right; for I never saw him awake by any chance.

M. de Kaisaroff, in reply, professed for me the highest interest, which he accounted for in having found amongst my papers some letters from the Princess Anne Daschkaw, (with whom he was well acquainted,) whose sentiments towards me confirmed the good opinion which he had conceived, and placed my character in the highest point of view; but he remarked that I must have some enemy in the country, and as he knew in common with everybody else the history of * * * * * *, he turned my suspicion from that channel to fix it upon one whom I had till then thought to be my friend, and who has lately been a very conspicuous personage in Russia, * * * * * *, a gentleman much in the princess's confidence, who had read her Memoir, with the dedication, and knew they were in my possession.

All this M. de Kaisaroff told me, and therefore he said he would ask me no questions; but that he was upon oath to prevent my taking the Memoir out of the country, as well as every other paper relative to Russia, and that I might depend upon it he could do so; he added, that he would endeavour to prove his respect and friendly intentions towards me by warning me that, even in case nothing

should be found amongst my baggage, I must undergo a personal search before I quitted Russia; and that as my servants would be liable to the same before they were permitted to return to Moscow, I had better be cautious what letters I sent by them!

I confess that my indignation was now excessive; but as this warning could only be friendly, I thanked him sincerely, and he took his leave.

After he quitted me, my reflections were of rather a painful kind. The princess's safety was of course my first object; and rather than expose the Memoir to the certainty of falling into other hands, and to I knew not what misconstructions, I determined upon destroying it. I burnt it accordingly, knowing that the copy which I had made was safely deposited in England by my sister, who took it with her. That point decided, I made up my mind to return to Moscow, if the dear princess were to be in the slightest degree implicated in any misfortune, and share it with her for the remainder of my life. I wrote her a full account of everything, and sent it secretly. I then awaited the result, employing myself by breaking open the letters to Count Worontzow, to Lady Pembroke, to Madame Tchichagof's sister, and others, thinking myself a more lenient judge than M. Kaisaroff. One letter I sent back to its writer, the others I kept open; one alone I would not presume to read—it was a love-letter! from Princess Mary Sherbatoff to Mr. Kerr Porter; and as I thought fire was its congenial element, I placed it

on a pile of wood, and in the presence of several witnesses I saw it evaporate in pure flame. The parties are since married.

At the end of five days from the morning I arrived at Cronstadt, M. de Kaisaroff requested another audience, and then congratulated me upon my entire acquittal. The music!—the mouse!—all were pronounced innocent; it was literally "the mountain in labour;" and I believe I laughingly said so, as I thanked my judge,—who, on his part, seemed particularly anxious that I should acquit him, on the score of gallantry, feeling, and so forth, requesting that I would write to the Princess Anne to that effect, which I accordingly did.

As the ship was that very day ready to sail, we determined to lose no time, but get on board as quickly as possible. Still, however, the personal search hung over me. We invited M. de Kaisaroff to dine with us and see us on board. He was engaged, but did not take leave, as he was to return before we set out. We therefore dined; and not finding that he came back according to appointment, we proceeded to the ship, where I bade adieu to my faithful and excellent Irene, not without a pang of heartfelt regret, and to the men-servants, who were moved to tears, and full of indignation at what had passed.

We embarked on the 26th of October, a beautiful autumnal evening. Every moment I expected M. de Kaisaroff; however, we weighed anchor,

and had only one more obstacle to encounter—namely, passing the guard-ship.

There was a small brig in company with us. Both ship and brig were a mercantile concern, laden with hemp. This last, which was badly manned, was to follow our track, and be taken in tow in case of difficulty. On board of her was a Mr. Donovan, a supercargo, a man who was tall and important-looking, with a gouty foot and yellow slippers; of singular irritability, nervous, and peculiarly alive to anything of the ridiculous. All this was on the surface,—the better qualities of his mind lay deeper.

On his arrival in Russia, the officers of the guard-ship had purchased a pipe of wine from him, and still owed him fifty pounds. As we passed the guard-ship we observed the signal for lying to, while officers got on board each ship to sign papers and dismiss us. I was now convinced that M. de Kaisaroff would come on board, and most uncomfortable did I feel; when, to my great astonishment and delight, I found that no such person appeared, that the papers were signed with all possible dispatch, and in a few moments we were under weigh.

The miracle was soon explained; for on looking at our neighbour the brig, we saw the unfortunate Mr. Donovan enduring the last hug of an officer who, in order to create a diversion whilst his companions were getting into their boat, overwhelmed

him with embraces; and then, in the energy of wishing him a safe passage, having trodden unmercifully on his unhappy foot, tripped away to his friends, leaving Mr. Donovan suffocated with rage at being so belaboured with kisses, and unable, between pain and want of breath, to demand his money, which they forgot to mention in the vehemence of their tender adieux!

I am afraid I laughed excessively, not only at the circumstance, but at its happening to the person I have described, whose keen sense of the ridiculous was such, that he would rather have lost fifty pounds more in a manly way, than have been kissed so absurdly out of his present loss. However, thanks to this affair of the debt, we found that, after all, we might have taken anything whatever away with us, for the anxiety of the guard-ship to get us off exceeded ours to be gone; and in a few minutes we lost sight of each other entirely.

The tumult of my mind during so long a period befriended the moment of departure; but when I now seated myself quietly on deck, and saw the sun setting in majestic splendour for the last time over a country so long my home, and where some of the warmest affections of my heart still lingered, I felt an indescribable sensation of calm and melancholy, and I fell into a profound reverie, in which my "Russian mother" filled all my thoughts. I shall never forget being aroused from this reverie by the man at the helm beginning to sing an English

song—music which I had not heard for above five years, and which at that moment brought with it a thousand affecting associations. It seemed to reproach me for the melancholy and regret in which I was absorbed, and to awaken the dear remembrance of home, of the friends I was now going to rejoin, and anticipation of the happiness yet in store for me.

It was already a brilliant starlight night, and dreading the effects of my close cabin, I would not go down below. After walking the deck, therefore, till one o'clock, the good-natured captain had my bed brought up and spread within a coil of new cable, where, wrapped in the colours of the United States, and a parcel of sailors' coats, I laid down, and soon fell into a profound slumber.

I had been asleep just three hours, when I was suddenly awakened by a most fearful shock, and a crash that appeared to me like the destruction of the universe. I started up, and instantly perceived a ship close upon ours, with sails, rigging, masts, and all, absolutely intertwined in each other. I stood mute and horror-struck, listening to what was said; when I soon gathered, amidst the confusion of reproaches, orders, and imprecations, that we were in imminent danger, from the brig having mistaken in the dark the track we had made, and bearing down right upon us with the wind in her favour. The shock was so violent that it bore off the brig in a side direction to a considerable distance in a

moment, where she cast anchor. In the next instant we felt the tremendous certainty of being wrecked by striking upon a rock, which was immediately followed by a second shock, that fixed the vessel, beating alternately stem and stern.

Poor Mr. Haliday, who had been in his berth, felt the well-known sensation, and came on deck, expecting a repetition of the scenes of misery which he had so recently witnessed and escaped. As for myself, in the first moment of danger, perhaps I could not well define my feelings; and in the next, my mind was so worked up by the various emotions of the last few months, that I never did, and perhaps never may again, feel so little terror at the approach of death.

I am surprised at myself; for I perfectly well remember thanking the Almighty that I was alone, and feeling an elevation of thought which is far above my ordinary frame of mind. Perhaps I had never before acted so exclusively upon a principle of duty as in quitting Russia, nor more under the Divine influence through fervent prayer; and I felt its consoling effects at that moment.

I had not time to weaken my mind by picturing to myself the misery of my friends; for though the thought flashed upon me, yet hope very soon suspended all other feelings, and awakened the idea of being preserved. Providentially the night was fine, and the wind moderate; our ship was coppered and well built. The captain had full possession of him-

self, and he gave us all confidence by his courage and presence of mind.

The boats were unlashed and prepared in case of necessity; but he recommended us to remain on board, if possible, till the morning dawned, lest we should be swamped amongst the breakers, in a part of the gulf of which he was totally ignorant, having mistaken his course in consequence of the extinction of a beacon light. He then fired minute guns as long as his store of ammunition lasted; and as he was greatly beloved, he prevailed on his crew to drink less freely than they usually do upon such occasions.

He brought up all my baggage, and he saved the private property of every individual on board except his own, which he abandoned expressly, lest he should be suspected of neglecting any effort to save the ship and the property of his employers.

In this situation we remained from four o'clock, A.M., till eight, when it began to grow light enough to allow Mr. Donovan to come from the brig to offer its assistance. It was a sad sight for him, as all his property was embarked in this venture; and he had made so many voyages in the poor "Maria," that as he watched her broken masts, rudder, and planks, floating down the tide, and saw her all dismantled and disfigured, he declared it was like watching the last moments of a dying friend.

When the morning allowed us to distinguish objects, we found ourselves in a more perilous state

than we had even imagined. The part of the gulf in which we were was full of rocks; and as the wind freshened, the breakers and swell of the sea were frightful. What we had supposed to be land during the night, proved to be large masses of rock rising out of the sea like islands, which could at best serve to shelter wild beasts; and had we ventured into the boats in the first moment of confusion, there is scarcely a doubt but that we must have been lost. Every appearance threatened bad weather; the minute guns only echoed back the melancholy tale of "a ship in distress;" and as we gazed around on the scene of desolation, we could not perceive a chance of being saved, except in the brig which had caused our misfortune, and which was but a crazy vessel. We therefore quitted the "Maria," and went on board the brig, resolving to make our situation known at Petersburg, and to return through Finland, if possible.

The minute guns, however, had been heard on shore, and to our great delight we perceived two little boats approaching, just as we were beginning to lose all hope of assistance for the day. It was two o'clock, P.M., when they came alongside of us, rowed by equal numbers of women and men. They told us, in the Finnish language, that they came from a little island called Stamieux, just twenty versts from Fredericksham, which was the land nearest to it.

Mr. Haliday and I went immediately on board one of the little boats, and before we reached the

island, the wind, which had been gradually rising, blew such a gale, that although we knew that the brig was in a very unsafe situation, and that we had promised to send a pilot to her assistance the moment we landed, yet no bribes could induce, and no persuasions could prevail upon, the islanders to encounter the storm. I do not recollect having at any period suffered so much misery. From one point of the island we could distinguish both the brig and the wreck; the latter was a melancholy picture of what the former was so soon likely to become, and I dreaded every moment seeing her go down, and every soul perish, without the possibility of affording them any assistance; while the poor sufferers on board must think us worse than savages, to forget them as soon as we were in safety ourselves. But the islanders were better judges of the matter than we were. Had they gone, their little boat could not have lived in such a surf, whereas, when at day-break the next morning I flew out to see what the storm had spared, I perceived the brig riding safely at anchor, but the poor "Maria" scarcely visible.

That very day Captain Hughes, its late worthy commander, found his way on shore, accompanied by six of his brave sailors; and being acquainted with the horrors sometimes perpetrated in cases of shipwreck, he had armed his party, swearing that if he did not find us in safety, he would not leave a man, woman, or child alive in the island.

The two first persons he met not giving him satisfactory answers to his questions by signs, his fury began to rise; and I know not what might have been the consequence had we not fortunately been walking in that direction and perceived him.

When he saw us, he was so much overcome that he burst into tears, and not being able to command his feelings, he drew his rough hand across his face, cursing his "eye-pumps, which were so leaky." Had he put his threats into execution, he would have murdered such innocence and goodness of heart, such hospitality, and, to crown all, such apparent happiness, as I never met with in my life before.

A rosy young woman, who had helped to row our little boat from the brig, had conducted us to her mother's hut, the principal one of the place. It was a spacious room, and singularly picturesque inside, from being furnished with all sorts of fishing utensils, and nets hanging in festoons from the high roof of the apartment. One casement window opened towards the rough ocean, and another towards a smooth little bay, where the brig soon lay at anchor. In this room the "*Mamma*," as she was called, lived, surrounded by a numerous tribe, and was in some measure the queen of the island.

She received us with genuine hospitality, made the large open stove blaze with a cheerful fire to dry and warm us, and produced her little store of milk and butter, which, together with black bread,

and some tea that we brought with us, formed our supper. She then prepared the best bed for me, and to my surprise I found it of the softest down, with pillow-cases embroidered and trimmed with lace. There were two others, almost equally good, in the cottage, and we might have fancied ourselves still in our berths on board, when at night all the family disappeared into different recesses, or stoves, or cupboards, to sleep.

At four o'clock in the morning, her son *Tuomas* came in with his boat from a neighbouring island: his arrival awoke the whole cottage. Up got the *Mamma*, and the old woman (her sister-in-law); up got the sister-in-law's daughter and her four children; up got the *Mamma's* daughter and her squalling child;—then came Maria and Sarah, the *Mamma's* unmarried daughters:—in a word, the room was soon crowded. They gathered round Thomas, heard his adventures, gave him his breakfast of raw salt fish, black bread, and sour milk, and then began the spinning wheels and the labour of the day, enlivened by stories, and smiles, and good humour. I never saw such industrious beings, nor creatures more apparently contented with their humble lot.

The *Mamma* understood Russ; and as soon as it was at all light I used to get up, and, attended by her, dress in a little offset to this common room: I then walked out; during which time the cottage was thoroughly cleaned, the windows opened,

and our frugal breakfast prepared. On my return, I used to find all the family at their separate employments, and I often wished I could have drawn a sketch of the inside of the cottage, with the pretty groups into which they formed themselves.

The *Mamma* was my delight. I tried to find out from her everything that I could relative to the state of a society in which she appeared to take the lead. She told me the population of the place was fifty-two souls, including men, women, and children. All their habits, manners, customs, and their religion, were such as had existed when they belonged to Sweden; at present they were Russian subjects.

She had another son, it appeared, at Fredericksham, learning to read, which they all could do without exception. A clergyman came to the island twice a-year, to instruct them in their religion, of which they appeared to understand the principles, and which, as well as I could judge, was Lutheran. There was a large bible in the cottage, of a very ancient date, in the Finnish language; and when Mr. Haliday read the words, though without comprehending them, their eyes sparkled with delight.

I was struck with a certain dignified simplicity in their mode of thinking, which, as far as one could judge, seemed to govern their actions in all things. When I opened my trunks in order to dry my clothes, we polished sharpers did not

think it prudent for both of us to quit the room at the same time; indeed, the various articles which composed my wardrobe strongly excited their curiosity and admiration. But when I selected different things as presents for the family, the *Mamma* answered in the name of all, in these words, as nearly as I can recollect:—

"My child, you are very good, and we thank you; but these fine things are of no value to us; and you are going across the great water, where you have friends who will take pleasure in seeing you wear them!"

I argued the point as long as I could, declaring that I felt under obligation for her hospitality and kindness. She smiled at this, and told me it was true she had heard of wicked islanders by whom shipwrecked persons were treated barbarously; but that for their parts they thought "unfortunates" were sent by God Almighty; and "surely," she added, "if I were shipwrecked where you live, you would be kind to me."

I could not deny this; and she persisted in refusing every gift, till I offered them in the disguise of "*keepsakes;*" but she told me I must in return accept a keepsake from her, which of course I did.

Nature has been bountiful to these dear islanders in the gifts of strength and rustic beauty; the women in particular are well formed, and, thanks to their industry, remarkably well clothed. Their costume is Swedish. They labour at the oar, and

manage the boats quite as well as the men; and I have seen them, after braving death in the rough blast, and exerting admirable courage and dexterity, haul their boats on shore, return to the cottage, refresh themselves slightly, and, with the utmost simplicity, sit down to their spinning or knitting as if nothing had happened, whilst I, at a humble distance, looked upon them as heroines.

The island is a barren rock of granite, but so singularly diversified with groups of fir-trees, which force themselves a passage through broken masses of rock, and so beautified by dimpling rivulets, by grottoes clothed in sea-weeds, by little creeks and bays, and all the variety of a beautifully indented shore, that on a fine day it looks like a sparkling gem in the ocean; but there is not pasture even for one cow, nor have the inhabitants the slightest knowledge of rural labour or any rural enjoyment.

During the eight days which we passed amongst these sons and daughters of the ocean, we had frequent visits from our friends on board the brig; and finding that now she was manned by so able a crew she might make a passage to Sweden without danger, I consented to embark once more when the wind proved favourable. In the meantime, we had written to our friends in Russia, but fortunately we could not send our letters before this plan had been proposed.

One day, after this arrangement, the captain

came on shore, and laughingly told me that I had been the cause of a grand reform on board the brig, as he found that the sailors, after arranging a room for me on deck, well known by the name of the round house, had drawn up a set of rules for themselves, by which any man who swore an oath within hearing of "*the lady*"—who got into a passion—who talked loud—who used offensive language—who quarrelled with another — or, in short, offended against any of fourteen well-defined articles, was to forfeit a shilling, or to receive a tap on the hand for each offence. The captain *swore out* that they were "*honest lads;*" upon which one of the sailors very deliberately came forward and claimed the forfeit due for this offence against the first article! The goodnatured captain paid it joyfully, though *the lady* was not within hearing, and was cheered by all the crew. The rules were written and hung up in a conspicuous place, remaining in full force during my stay on board.

On the eighth day after our arrival at Stamieux the wind changed, and we prepared for our departure, not without some little fears, and a great many regrets at bidding adieu to the innocent, happy islanders. I told the *Mamma* I should like to take her with me; and her answer was, "Ah, you will have people enough to love you where you are going, without the old *Mamma;* and if she were to go, she would find nobody to love her but you; she would regret her children and the island; and

you are too goodnatured not to feel sorry at seeing her always a stranger, for she is too old to learn your language."

At the moment of bidding her adieu she kissed me with affection, which I most sincerely returned, and her eyes filling with tears, she said, "May God bless you, my dear child, and guide you safely over the great water; but pity me, for I shall never know it!"

Just as we were getting under weigh, a boat hailed us; it was the dear old *Mamma*, who, having found a pocket-handkerchief belonging to me, immediately ordered out her boat, and, with the assistance of one of her daughters, rowed off to the ship, and was glad, she said, to take another look at us, and to tell me that she should pray for my safety and happiness. She lingered near us as long as it was possible, but we soon lost sight of her, and of the happy island.

We had a pilot from Stamieux on board, but he only undertook to go a certain distance, when, he said, we must hoist a signal for another pilot from the island of Aspo, as he was not acquainted with the navigation of that part of the gulf, which was very dangerous.

It was nearly four o'clock, P.M., and blowing rather fresh, when we discovered the island of Aspo, and hoisted the signal. To our dismay, no answering signal appeared. The pilot we had on board declared that he could not venture any further, and we fired a gun to attract pity, but

in vain! At length, we found ourselves so close to the rocks which guard this dangerous coast, that we were forced to drop our anchor at a moment's warning, or we should inevitably have been lost.

Our anchor checked the ship from dashing against a rock, and gave us time to lower a boat, in which the captain landed in an instant, and compelled a pilot to come on board and take upon him the responsibility of the ship's safety,—which, when obliged to, he did with perfect ease, bringing her into safe anchorage in a few minutes. We then went on shore and found a sort of town, which, after the hamlet we had quitted, appeared to us quite magnificent, and crowded with inhabitants.

We were well received, and shewn to the best cottage in the place, which, though it appeared to be built with more refinement, was less clean and comfortable than the *Mamma's*. Mr. Haliday cooked our supper, which was a mess of soup; and when this was served up by the master of the hut, to our surprise he produced a silver ladle, some silver spoons, and a candlestick, which was quite a curious piece of workmanship, opening into a pair, and evidently made for the accommodation of travellers accustomed to luxuries. This told a tale of no very cheering kind, and we began to think we had got upon one of the wicked islands of which the simple-hearted *Mamma* had heard.

I took care not to open my trunks here, and we resolved to set sail as soon as possible. But the

wind shifted right against us, and we were forced to make the best of it.

At Aspo I had a room to myself, but I slept on straw till I got my own bed from the ship. I had also an old woman to attend upon me, but poor Eva was far less agreeable than the *Mamma;* indeed there was a striking difference in everything, except the nature of the islands; and as we wandered over Aspo, we found it of the same description as Stamieux, only on a larger scale and more picturesque. The granite rocks were magnificent, and in many places detached fragments of an enormous size lay on the surface like pebbles. There was likewise a granite causeway, which measured four hundred of my usual steps in walking. This place commanded a superb view of almost all the island, of the ocean, and of distant land. One day we walked entirely across the island, and I never saw anything more romantic.

On the side where we had been forced to cast anchor, the sea roars, and dashes, and breaks into clouds of white spray; while on the opposite side, two harbours of smooth water, shaded round by trees, and from their tranquil character forming a strong contrast with the other, invite ships to seek for shelter; but they sometimes prove a treacherous lure, as the navigation is singularly difficult, being full of hidden rocks; and we had soon convincing proofs that the plunder of wrecks was a sort of livelihood to the inhabitants of Aspo, or at least one of the sweeteners of their lives.

Day after day passed, and the wind was still contrary. At length, however, it changed, but brought with it sleet and foul weather; another time we had snow. But when we saw our ship actually fast in ice, (as was the case one morning,) we began seriously to despair of quitting Aspo for the whole winter; which was the more distressing as we had every chance of being short of provisions, with a great many men to feed.

In two days the frost disappeared, but the wind was against us. It was during this sort of anxious life that, one day as we were walking on the causeway, four ships appeared in the offing, in the utmost distress, with signals flying for pilots to go on board. Every man in the island was a pilot, but neither bribes nor remonstrances could prevail on one to go to the assistance of the unfortunate vessels, which appeared as if they were going to make a tack, which must have been their destruction. The islanders declared that it was the express law of the Emperor of Russia that they should not pilot any vessels into port during the war, of any description; with twenty other things equally false and inhuman.

A crowd assembled on the causeway to watch the event, with feelings equally agitated, but from very opposite causes. Some of the islanders could scarcely restrain a shout of triumph (which, however, sparkled in their eyes) when destruction appeared inevitable. But, providentially, the first

ship escaped the point of danger, found the channel, and sailed up in perfect safety!

The shout of triumph was ours,—the three other vessels had only to follow the track of the first, and it was clear they intended doing so. The imperial orders!—the fear of punishment!—danger to the state!—all were forgotten in a moment; and perceiving that there was no longer any chance of plunder, three pilots put out to sea in an instant, deeming it wiser to secure their fees, than to endure the mortification of losing everything after so fine a prospect. This happened on a Sunday; and in the evening they were assembled as usual, praying and singing psalms, with every appearance of devotion!

Three weeks passed away in this manner: our *fresh* meat was six weeks' old, the two cows (all that the island afforded) had long ceased to give milk, and we were almost obliged to put ourselves upon an allowance; while, thanks to the sea air and the healthful lives we led, our appetites were unusually keen. Our situation was becoming very uncomfortable, and the season was so far advanced, that the prospect of sailing down the gulf was most alarming. At length, on the 26th of November, both wind and weather appeared favourable, and on the 27th we got on board and set sail. I did not know the extreme danger we were in the first night, till we were congratulated on our escape the following morning. We were five days and nights

in making our passage to Carlscrona, in Sweden, a fearful voyage, during which the captain remained every night on deck, exerting his utmost skill. We had frost, snow, and sleet, and we began to fear that the ropes would become unmanageable from the severity of the frost. More than once we imagined ourselves doomed to a Danish or a French prison, as privateers were frequently seen at a distance.

The last alarm of this kind which we experienced was near Carlscrona, on the 2nd of December, when, at eight o'clock in the morning, three enemy's ships were descried. We made for the harbour as quickly as possible, and were perhaps too small to attract notice, particularly as a British man-of-war was stationed there. At eleven o'clock our anxieties were ended, and we experienced the blessing of coming on shore. Need I attempt to express it?

At Carlscrona we met several of the captains of ships that we had left at Cronstadt, and we learned from them that Monsieur de Kaissaroff had quitted the town, leaving every one in repose, the day after we sailed; but that orders had arrived on the following day to arrest our poor captain, on account of the men who were found on board the Maria.

We remained a few days at Carlscrona, to rest, and to procure a carriage to proceed on our journey. We then set off for Gottenburg, making a little circuit. We stopped for two days at Helsingburg, which was interesting at that time from its situation, being exactly opposite to Elsineur, with which place

there was constant intercourse by means of flags of truce.

Some English frigates guarded the passage of the Sound. It was a very animated scene, and particularly interesting to us, as our poor companions were daily expected to pass in a large fleet, with convoy, and we did not know whether the exasperated Danes would not give them battle within sight of us. We saw nothing of them, however, and we proceeded on our journey, which we completed by arriving at Gottenburg on the 16th of December. On the 18th we again set sail, and after a tolerable passage, considering the time of the year, (and one regular clearing out for battle, occasioned by a false alarm,) we landed at Harwich on the 26th of December, 1808.

LETTERS FROM RUSSIA,

IN THE

YEARS 1805, 1806, & 1807.

[Of the following letters, written by Miss Wilmot, the elder sister of the Editor, it was intended to have made only a few extracts, such as would help to convey an idea of what Princess Daschkaw was in the latter years of her life. But on looking over the collection for this purpose, from copies which had long ago been furnished through the kindness of those friends and relations to whom they were addressed, it was found that it would hardly be doing justice to the writer, or indeed to the subject they are produced to illustrate, were this intention strictly adhered to. Under this impression, instead of selecting a few meagre and necessarily unconnected passages, it has been at length thought expedient to publish the letters, with very little omission, and that only of matter interesting to few others than the parties in correspondence. They will be found to present, and in no long detail, an animated picture of the various and novel scenes in which the writer was engaged during a visit of a

year and a half at Moscow and Troitskoe; and in these Princess Daschkaw bears a prominent part. Objects and views are thus brought forward, as they were reflected through the medium of a singularly lively imagination, and are portrayed with a spirit and originality of thought and style which cannot fail to interest and gratify the general reader; whilst to the few now remaining who remember Miss Wilmot, and enjoyed her intimacy, they will revive a pleasing recollection of those bright sallies of fancy and force of expression which gave a peculiar zest and character to her conversation.

Nothing could possibly be more remote from the contemplation of the writer of these letters than that they should ever be circulated beyond the limits of that intimate knot of friends to whom they were addressed; and certainly but for the occasion which now seems to call them forth, such an idea would never have occurred to any of her relatives. Copies of them were permitted to be taken by her sister, as has been intimated, and they were preserved, along with her own journals, as an animated chronicle of the interesting period which they passed together in Princess Daschkaw's society. They are now offered to the public as a testimony, in concurrence with the preceding narrative, of the respect and attachment which bound them both to that distinguished friend, and as affording some supplementary notices in illustration of the memoir to which they are appended.

It remains now only to be said, that Miss Wilmot,

whose constitution was never strong, began, soon after her return from Russia, to experience a serious advance of that disorder, the asthma, the commencement of which she deplores in one of her letters, as "a drag upon the very wheels of her existence." It was soon found that the dampness of her native climate was most injurious to this complaint, which led her to seek, in some inland part of France, a more favourable place of residence. She established herself therefore at Moulins, where, with the interruption of occasional visits to her friends in England and Ireland, she remained three or four years, with some intervals of ease, but little hope of any permanent improvement of health. Increasing illness at length induced her to take up her abode in Paris, and there, after a few weeks of painful suffering, brought her to the grave on the 28th of March, 1824.]

TO A. W.

On board the Good Intent, lying before the fortifications of Cronstadt in the Mole, August 4th, 1805.

THIS day three weeks we left London, and at six o'clock this morning anchored in Russia. Now, my dear A., I may just as well fold up my letter; for as I am a state prisoner on board ship, I have only taken a few observations through the telescope on deck. I have but to communicate that the masonry of the forts and batteries before me is handsome, and the works impregnable; that the men-of-war are

beautiful and numerous; and that the mole is crowded with merchantmen, which I much fear will considerably retard our operations. The water, too, is alive with little boats returning from Peterhof, where last night, in consequence of the empress dowager's birth-day, masquerades and other fêtes were held for her honour and glory.

On the opposite shore, stretching along the water and surrounded with woods, is the country palace called Oranienbaum. This is all I see of Russia, except, of its inhabitants, two custom-house officers, who came the moment we anchored, and sealed up our trunks, and now a soldier who stays on deck to watch that nothing contraband be conveyed away from the ship. The captain, good man, is gone on shore to see what is to be done; but as this day is Sunday, nothing, I fear, very effective can be expected. Strange to say, little did I expect that the first thing I should have to complain of in Russia was heat;—but so it is, and that is intolerable.

On the 26th of July, we passed Elsineur, which I had figured to myself as a wretched, straggling place, a sort of long-necked, yelping thing, that barked the king's prerogative at every passenger. But its situation is really delightful; and had we been delayed there, we might have gone to Helsingburg, in Sweden, only a morning's row, where the court resides at present, and which we saw distinctly from the terrace in Hamlet's garden. However, we sailed away, leaving two of our companions, whose

voyage ended there—one a West Indian abomination, the other a Russian officer, Baron Boÿe, the most extraordinary creature I ever encountered. Though only twenty-seven years of age, there was nothing which he did not know. For the first two days, he kept scampering at full stride up and down the deck, day and night I believe, for his footsteps seemed incessant, smiling, frowning, and muttering to himself. His appearance at the first glimpse was rather vagabondish, and one was next at a loss to know whether he was really insane, or only walking in his sleep. As I did not come out of my cabin the first day to dinner, I could be no judge of his manners or conversation. The next day, however, I was amazed at his style of handling the opinions of the two talking men of our crew—viz., my protector, Mr. Whitlock, an English merchant, and the odious West Indian. There were others present, and he addressed them all in their own language, servants and all; so that before he quitted table I heard him speak Russ, German, French, Swedish, Italian, and English. He had been brought up in the camp of Suvarroff, whom he appeared to idolize; and having fought under him in Italy, gave us the detail of all the battles, and told of all the heroes of the day, with the quickest power of description possible. He had contrived to receive a classical education, and was not only acquainted with the literature and politics of Europe, but had all the poets at his fingers' ends. His abhorrence

of the French was most comical in its effect on his nerves, producing a sort of spasms which agitated his whole frame, and after a torrent of abuse of their nation and revolution, he struck at the root of all mischief, in avowing his abhorrence of every species of civilization. With learning, refinement, and eloquence, he supported most admirably the system of barbarism, in opposition to all existing rules and customs of society, and quoted the ancients with as much ease as —— does Æsop's Fables. He was altogether exceedingly diverting by his enthusiasm, his variety, and animated action, which made Eleanor, I believe, take him for a monkey, as he most frequently chattered in French,—till she discovered, what she esteemed an infallible sign, not only of a Christian, but a "*rail* gentleman"—that he had hands "as white as a lily."

Our party, on leaving Elsineur, was sadly fallen off, and became as stupid, and hungry, and well, and eating and drinking, as if we had nothing to do but fatten ourselves for a Nova Zembla feast. Since we left Elsineur we have scarcely felt the motion of the ship; and the evening we quitted it, sailing up the sound like lightning, Copenhagen, which is washed by the waves, flitted by us like a scene in a magic lantern, the floating batteries still lying before it as in 1801, when Lord Nelson gained the battle.

Nine long days have we been navigating that sometimes dangerous sea the Baltic, and Gulf of Finland. I do not well know how to account for the

time. Sometimes I amused myself with reading "Madame de la Vallière;" sometimes, books on navigation, belonging to the captain; sometimes, "Les Mères Rivales;" sometimes, in endeavouring to reform a reprobate cabin boy, who is on the high road to the gallows; sometimes, with the horses in the hold; then, hearing of battles from the sailors. Thus reading, working, and sleeping like a top, till this morning we came to an anchor at Cronstadt.

Sunday evening.—The captain has most agreeably interrupted me with a letter from M., written this day two months, from Troitskoe, which he had received from Mr. Booker, the English agent at Cronstadt. The princess had herself sealed it with a seal on which was engraved for the purpose, in large letters, the word "Welcome," and writes in the inside, "My sentiments you can discover in that word on the seal." Mr. Booker sent me a most kind note by his cousin, who came on board to deliver it; it was to invite me to dinner and to offer me his services. I wrote to him in return, refusing the dinner part of his friendship, but enclosing letters to be forwarded to Moscow. The kind princess has written to General Koroffko and Admiral Hannikoff, both residents at Cronstadt, to engage their attentions on my behalf; but I believe I shall not apply to either. My whim is, at least at present, to stick like a rat to the ship till it reaches Petersburg. M. tells me that a letter most flattering to me has been also written by the princess to

her niece, Madame de Paliansky, at whose house I am to be received; as well as others of introduction to Madame de Tchichagoff, wife to the First Admiral and Minister of Marine, and to Mlle. de Kotchetoff, a niece of the princess, and maid of honour to the empress.

I will now put this by, as I suppose I must enclose the statue of Peter the Great, or you would not release my letter from the post-office. So I'll go walk on deck and view the fortifications.

Wednesday, St. Petersburg, at Mr. Raikes'.—Late last night I arrived in this magnificent-looking town. On Monday morning, Mr. Booker sent his carriage to the mole, and Mr. Whitlock accompanied Ellen and me to his house in Cronstadt, where he received us most hospitably, and sent us in his carriage to undergo the usual examination at the admiralty. We then returned to dine at his house, where he insisted on our remaining during our stay at Cronstadt. I never felt weather in Italy more intolerably hot than this, and the mosquitoes are absolutely tormenting.

Yesterday morning, Mr. Raikes put us into a barge, and giving us a trusty conductor, sent us across to Oranienbaum, eight versts, where a carriage and another worthy attendant from Mr. Raikes met us, with a letter of invitation from his lady, begging I would make her house my home at Petersburg. Oranienbaum is a country palace of the emperor's, and I immediately set off to see it. The grounds are a sort of Vaux-

hall on a gigantic scale, and the palace is full of curiosities, which I have not time to dilate on, for you must know the post is closed, and this letter is to be smuggled in by some special favour of old Mr. Raikes. We then drove on to Petersburg, which is a little journey further of thirty versts, and a more delightful drive I never beheld. It reminds one of that from Paris to Versailles, but much more to be admired. Palaces of great beauty rising up on each side of the road, clothed in forests and adorned with elaborately-laid-out pleasure-grounds and lawns, here strike one with astonishment. Two or three of these are imperial residences; and the road, which is broad and excellent, swarms with all descriptions of carriages, several with four horses abreast and two to the shafts, some cream-coloured, like our royal Hanoverians, and with manes and tails down to the ground.

The moon rose as yellow as gold over the dark groves, and lighted us on to Petersburg, where we arrived at eleven o'clock at night. I was in a state of perfect delight with all I had seen. The family of the Raikes were assembled in the balcony, and came down stairs to meet us. We were then conducted up to the same balcony, where many civilities passed, and whence I saw the reach, if it may so be called, of a noble street, the river, the finest river I ever beheld, running between this and the opposite houses.

I forgot to tell you, I have received a second letter from M., written only a fortnight ago, full of messages

of the most affectionate nature from the princess, who has put matters in train for my being hooped out and presented at court. I am going to write a note to Madame Paliansky, to inform her of my arrival, for it is at her house, as I have said, that the princess wishes me to reside for the present, and for which purpose Madame P. has sent me the most obliging invitations. I am to delay, therefore, for a fortnight at Petersburg, and then proceed to Moscow. Trusty servants, travelling carriages, and every requisite for my journey, are to be provided for me; in short, my way is really strewed with flowers; for what with the affection of the princess, and her influence, everything is *smack smooth;* and my only difficulty is how to repel politeness. I have written an expostulatory letter to the princess on the subject of her coming to Moscow this melting weather; an intention on her part which M. assures me is a sacrifice to welcome and hospitality beyond anything I can have a conception of. Already a fox-fur pelisse of the rarest kind is provided for my bones, and sundry pieces of satin, together with a sarsanet dress, for my *squire*, Eleanor. I expect this year to turn out a fairy tale. But oh, the bugs and mosquitoes punish us severely! I have slept on chairs, with the slightest possible covering, these two nights.

While I write, my eye is attracted by the sight of academies and palaces, ships sailing along this magnificent river seen from my windows, and bands playing under them. But the appearance of the

men servants so amuses me. They look as if a Turk had been their father, and a quaker their mother. I know not how to describe it otherwise. The sound of the language is soft and agreeable. And now adieu!

TO H. W.

St. Petersburg, Aug. 26, chez Mad. de Paliansky.

Do not attempt to suppose that I can give you a detail of my life and adventures, and do not dare to ask it; for when that book of M.'s lies before you, a description of either persons or places would be absolutely a work of supererogation. I am in the same house, even in the same apartment, at the same time of the year, have crossed the ocean in the same ship, and have got the same servant who conducted her to Moscow. The princess has in addition sent me Jerkoff, her favourite major domo, who has been with me since my arrival. My rheumatic protector still calls to inquire after my safety. I have, in fact, a levee every morning; for what with letters I brought from London, and M.'s friends, and those of Madame de Paliansky, the mornings are very pleasantly interrupted by visitors.

On my coming here, it was the princess's desire that I should be presented at court, and measures were taken accordingly by her niece; but as the court was at Peterhof, and an opportunity occurred for hastening my journey to Moscow, I begged to de-

cline the honour which was proposed. It so happened, however, that their majesties came to Petersburg, and the opportunity of going to Moscow failed, through a wisp of circumstances too troublesome to disentangle in a letter; so that I was left without any excuse, and my name was therefore given in to the Countess Pratasof, dame d'honneur, for a presentation. This delay cost me eight days; and till yesterday the imperial operation was not performed.

Two days before, I went in full puff to wait on Countess Pratasof, who was to present me; and yesterday, you may fancy me driven full speed in a coach and six to the palace of the Tauride, and conducted into an immense marble hall, full of statues and columns. From the hall I was ushered into a sumptuous saloon, filled with officers in uniform glittering with decorations, through which I passed to another, which was empty, leading to the chamber of presentation. You will think it extraordinary that I went by myself; but such was the etiquette. On reaching this room, two lords in waiting rose from their seats, and very politely began to address me in French. One other lady had arrived before me; when presently in flourished General Kutusof, uncle to Madame Paliansky, who is chief in command of the troops just about to march against the French, and whom I had not before known. He is a most respectable old gentleman, and I felt quite at my ease in having him as a *point d'appui*. Presently afterwards in came a lady, bowing like a

man, which is the old Russian mode of salutation, with a diamond cypher on her left shoulder; followed in a few minutes by a pretty little girl, looking very modest, and very much like a victim. We all began to talk to one another, to walk about the room, and to look at the beautiful garden in which the palace is situated.

After having waited three-quarters of an hour, an opposite door opened, whence the Empress Elizabeth advanced towards us, followed by the fat Countess Pratasof at her heels. The empress is one of the loveliest creatures I ever beheld. There is something in her countenance and figure which put me very much in mind of a print I have somewhere seen,—I believe from Angelica Kaufman,—of Cordelia, King Lear's daughter. At her entry the ladies rose, and the gentlemen retired. She was dressed in white embroidery, with pearls of immense size in her beautiful light brown hair. There was an air of humility, modesty, and sweetness in the demeanour of this most interesting personage, captivating beyond expression; and when we were presented, and fain would have kissed her hand, there was a sort of seeming struggle as it were to prevent the ceremony, when she herself in her turn stooped to kiss our cheeks. She spoke French to all, except to one Russian lady, whom she addressed in Russ. Her voice is very sweet and low, and she spoke as quick as lightning. Appropriate trifles were of course all she uttered. She asked me how I liked Petersburg, and hoped it

had given me a good impression. I replied it had; was not that witty? She said she had heard of my sister at Moscow, and that she understood it was my intention to take a long journey thither, for the gratification of seeing her. I answered, *Yea*, and that I had delayed at Petersburg only for the honour of being presented to her imperial majesty. She then bowed, and after remaining about a quarter of an hour, all standing in a semi-circle near her, she withdrew, with a mob of attendants following her steps.

Sunday, August 27th.—I am grievously vexed at finding myself doomed to a still further delay. After being presented to the young empress, I find it is the indispensable etiquette to go through the same ceremony with the dowager empress; for which purpose Madame Paliansky presented me to Princess Prosorofsky last night, who said she would report me to her imperial majesty, and let me know the day I was to be received. One of my Russian acquaintance is Countess Worontzof, at whose house I spent a very pleasant day in the country. You may guess from her name that she is a near relation of this house. She knew all the persons whom I was acquainted with in Italy, and had taken the same tour I did, only a few months later. Her sister, it was said, the beautiful Princess Galitzin, is going to be married to our ambassador, who, by the bye, has been very attentive to me in consequence of Lord Harrowby's

letter. He sent me a very polite note, offering his services, and then called upon me with his secretary, Mr. Stewart. Not being at home when he called, and having to beg his assistance in the affair of my presentation, I wrote to him the request I had to make, which occasioned a second visit on his part, but with no better success than the former. A third broke the spell, when he promised to see Madame Pratasoff, which was necessary on this occasion, and informed me in the evening, at a grand supper at Princess Valchonsky's, where I met him and all the embassy, that he had done so.

As to the English here, it is like going into another country to associate with them, for they live entirely to themselves. Mr. Raikes's house I look upon as a home, and it is impossible to describe their kindness. But my wonder of a friend in the family is Mrs. Raikes's brother, Mr. Cavanaugh, a gentleman remarkably accomplished in sundry languages and general information, with a capital head-piece. I informed him very expeditiously that I had received offers of service from everybody, but to prevent all confusion and come to the point, I named him my master of ceremonies and bear-leader as long as I remained at Petersburg. In virtue of this appointment, he comes to me every morning, to receive, as he says, my orders, and most kind and effective he is in executing every commission I have to give, and others which his experience is always ready to suggest.

The lower orders of the people astonish me by their grotesque appearance, and the patriarchal length of the men's beards: it is difficult to conceive that they were not born before the flood. At the rising and setting of the sun, and on some other occasions, they begin to cross themselves most vehemently, and the operation does not finish in less than a quarter of an hour. They bow their heads almost down to the ground, and then not only recover their balance, but throw themselves proportionately backwards, crossing themselves at arm's-length. The old women comfortably kneel down and kiss the ground, taking the precaution to slip their hands between it and their lips. I often see floating on timber planks on the river before our windows a dozen men, perhaps, bowing with all their might and main in the manner I have mentioned, with their long beards streaming in the wind, and giving the idea of some fell enchanters laying the angry spirits of the deep.

Thursday, 29th August.—I protest I know not what I was going to say, but you may imagine the little time one has for writing. Guess the only book I have bought since I came here,—the Court Almanack; but such is the torture I undergo about names, that I find it indispensable. Next Monday, the 1st of September, I am to set off.

31st of August.—A fatality hangs over this unhappy letter; it is Sunday night, and not yet gone. The delay, however, would give me an opportunity

of inserting another grand ceremony which took place to-day—my presentation to the dowager empress; but it would furnish no great variety to the details of the one I have already given. She is a very fine-looking woman, tall and well made, and though between forty and fifty years old, has quite the air and appearance of a young person. I am now at full liberty to take my departure from Petersburg. The travelling carriage which I have got is excellent; and with my two protectors, Frederick and Jerkoff, I have nothing to fear. Well, good night; the weather is growing chilly, but I shall have a fine moon for my journey.

FROM ELEANOR CAVANAGH TO LITTLE MISS H. C.

Petersburg, August 20th, 1805.

Miss Henrietta,—While I was in the ship, one night, turning round in my bed, I laughed to myself to think the time down in the village that you bid me send my love to you, all the way from Russia; and I'll engage I thought of it often enough both by sea and land. 'Tis likely you would have got it by the letters my mistress writes; but I'd be ashamed to put it in my own words; and since you asked me to tell you how I liked Russia, when once I was out of Ireland, 'tis the plainest way to slip in this bit of a letter that will be unsealed by yourself in Glanmire. If I know, no more than a fool, how

to make it out; but 'tis *quair* things I have been seeing. I like London very well, but it is more like Cork than where we are. I saw a fine play there; the maid of the house and Captain Wilmot's *sarvant* were sent to take care of me. Ogh now, but the horse-rider! Nice gold lace trimming his jacket, and *rale* gentlemen and ladies dancing on the stage! I saw a *dail* of things there, and in the park too; fashions of every sort; and the London ladies with their red cheeks, painted, I'll engage, (Lord save us,) and brazen hats turned up to the front. I did not think so bad of the voyage at all, because I was not half so sick as in the ship coming from Ireland. We stopt at a place in Denmark, and all the sea was covered over with ships like a wood. 'Twas very pleasant; as to that, we had but two stormy days of all the passage. Signs by, I sat out, and made a gown while we were going along. Everything was very nice in the ship; the captain was a very good sort of a captain; and plenty of hens to lay fresh eggs; and a room with two beds to ourselves. We could get everything from James the steward through the little window out. Indeed, the captain, and above all the old gentleman, and the servant, who did everything like the father of a family, ('twas he who took care of us from London,) were good natured. I think nothing of being at sea, though they say we sailed fifteen hundred miles of ground. I never was so surprised as to see Mr. Booker's carriage at Cronstadt, where we

anchored, in Russia, drive down to the shore for us to take us up to his house. 'Twas because the coachman had a *quair* long sash, and a black beard, and a coat plaited about the man's waist, may I never stir, like a petticoat! The Lord be praised, there were English maid *sarvants* there, and indeed they were very civil; and a fine set of children belonging to the lady of the house.

Ough, Miss H., to see the countrywomen! Why would not they content themselves to dress like Christians? 'Twould sour one to look at the *craitures*, with their blue, and yellow, and green cloth petticoats, bound with gold, and bouncing bobs of *air*-rings in their *airs*, and shift-sleeves like men's shirt-sleeves. 'Twould make one ashamed to think how they'd ape the quality. I'll engage they would not forget their *baid* necklaces! Better for them wash their faces, and not have so many *flaighs* hopping about them.

'Twas two days after we went, that we quit Mr. Booker, and sailed eight miles across to a fine palace, I would not know the name, off it were not Orangenbaam; there another coach, and two *sarvants* with ugly beards, one of them as red as a rose, came to take us thirty miles on to Petersburg. Why, would you believe it, ma'am? they put four long-tailed horses all in a row, and then two again at the end of long rope traces; and they seldom cuts the manes of them at all, for down they hang in bushels of plaits, or else without them; and *ough*,

then, to hear the smack and the cry that the postilions give, and how they drive like smoke up the hills, that I *mighten't;* but I made full sure to myself that we were fairly out of Ireland then.

I never see anywhere in Glanmire such a show of palaces and big woods as them, all by the country at either side, while we drove along. Images out upon the roofs, with wings growing out of them, as natural as a bird, if it was not that I seen one on one of the gentlemen's heels, he* that had a big cork-screw in his hand, and by that I knew it might be the country where all the wine comes from. I was tired of reckoning and looking at them; and the summer-houses, and the elegant green lawns, and the loads of roses and geraniums, all out of doors. 'Twas well we came in the evening, for the days are killing hot; and the sun here is a bigger and a more scalding one than in Ireland.

I'll never forget how beautiful Petersburg looked the first day. Cork is a *flaigh* to it; and the river as large as the Lee five times over; I don't believe they call it by that name though! We slept that night at Mr. Raikes's, in a great church of a house: very civil people, and all as one as Mr. Read, or Mr. Anderson, down at Fermoy. I'll engage I got *tai* and fine *craim*, and plenty of it for my breakfast; and Miss Raikes's maid gave me a nice border of a lace cap; and Miss Wilmot's white wrapper dressed me up smart enough to go with the *sarvants* of the

* Mercury with his caduceus.

house down to see the palace. I thought the screach would have choaked me, when turning round my head, what would I see leaping over a *rail* rock but a giant of a man on the back of a *dragin* of a horse. Stop him, says I; for I declare, Miss Henrietta, but I thought the life would have left me to see a live Christian making such a fool of himself; when what did I hear but that he was a marble emperor, some old snake of a man, that they called *Pater*, or *Pater* the Great, or something like that.

The next day, Madame Paliansky, a fine, black-eyed, pleasant young lady, sent off her carriage for us. It was at night that we arrived here at her house; and I had a dread over me to walk through so many ball-rooms, as the black-a-moor, with a yellow jacket, and a turban, and a couple of candles in his hands, made us go through. Many a gown might nurse Connel get out of the crimson damask that the walls are papered with! Ough, but the flies bit us all night long. I was wishing for Mary Harley, and Mrs. Harley too, for the matter of that, to see the sight I seen when I woke in the morning. *Carry me out*, says I, who are you with your gold tossals, and star upon your stomach, and crown upon your head? She had her eyes fixed upon mine; and close enough she watched me, wherever I turned. They say, too, she is an emperor of Russia, and she hangs in a gold frame, as if she was alive.

Ma'am, says I to my mistress, what time do they breakfast in this *quair* place? The word was hardly

out of my mouth, when *thump!* a rap at the door, and in walks a grenadier of a man with a silver tray, and coffee pot, and two cups and saucers, and a great *haip* of rusks, not on a plate at all; and after him strealed in at his heels a girl with a bit of a note to Miss Wilmot from her mistress, to ask whether she would like a melon for her breakfast. Says I to her, if we were in Cork now, they'd give us a fresh egg. With that she was so struck, that she went out of the room shaking her head; but the sirrah an egg came at all. Why, ma'am, here they would as soon think of flying as eating their breakfasts together. The next day, above at Mr. Raikes's, where I went to bring a bed-gown I left behind, the young Englishwoman and her brother left me in the passage while they went for their hats, when up comes a Russian with a black beard like a horse's tail, and putting his back against the wall, he *stud* and said nothing at all. The inside of me soured at the sight of him; and there he stud as grand as twopence. "'Tis a shame, sir," said I, "that you don't shave off that horse's tail that's hanging from your chin, and not leave it there to frighten the people." With that I looked at him as bitter as soot. On he puts his clean pair of white linen gloves, not minding a word I said, and then began to tighten his *culgee* of a fringed sash about his waist. Out we went, and who should I see but the *beard* following the young woman, and her brother, and me. "I'd be ashamed to walk the streets of Cork with the likes of you," says I,

and looked as black as a sweep. With that they all laughed, and I came home and told it all to my mistress.

'Tis a pleasure to see the plenty of rooms there is to the bed-chambers. The three we have to ours are all full of glass and gold, and white marble tables, and a harp and a harpsichord, and stoves up to the ceilings, with gold angels upon them, and a clock that plays eight tunes of itself; and all the floors are made of square bits of mahogany, or something like it. Every day at dinner the life almost *laves* me with laughing, when I look up at the blackamoor who brings me up my dinner. "Give me a bit of bread," says I. "*Glep*," says he; for the craiture don't know to call it by the right name. "Well, then, give me glep, if that's your fun," says I again; and though he talks in that way, it is as surely bread as any in Ireland.

We have music enough all over this house; eight men *sarvants* sit down with their flutes and fiddles. They call them slaves though, but the never a bit of a chain do I see hanging about them any way. You'd like for to see the beautiful new gown I've got, and my mistress's sister is to make me a present of a silk one, just out of the shop, and a silver crucifix that was made a present to me, and a green silk bonnet that I bought myself. I am very happy, I likes my place very much; and Miss Henrietta, if you'll go down to the village, you may tell my father and mother that I often thinks of their advice and follows it; and remember me to

Mrs. Mann. Why, I sometimes think, 'tis only to put on my hat and cloak, and down I might run to the village, when I look out of the window and sees Russia again before my eyes.

I went to three of their churches here, and they are the same as our chapels, as to all I see; but there is one all the same, and Miss Wilmot knows a Roman, who she has spoken to to send a *clargy* here for me to confess to. 'Tis for you to tell my people below in the village that I mention it, I never goes out without *laive*. Last Sunday I was out all day with a very civil English family; and, Miss Henrietta, will you *plaise* to tell them down below that I never makes free with anybody, nor wont. One might bid one of them to "come here" loud enough, but, like fools, they stand grinning, unless you say, "*Paddy, Suddy*," and then they bounce up and run as fast as anything; 'tis true, for me. Why now, Miss Henrietta, would it not be enough to turn one's heart into a curd fairly, to hear them say, *da*, instead of *yes;* and *niet*, instead of *no?* But their *aiting* is good enough, and a *dail* of it, and fruits of all kinds. They brought me in a plate of ice, and flampt a big lump of it into my tumbler of wine and water. I thought my heart would be broke in telling them I wasn't used to it, but in they flounced another; I'll engage they thought they were making it as strong as whiskey.

Give my love, ma'am, to Mr. Hayes the butler, and the ladies, and, above all things, to Master

Edward, and to Mrs. Kanailly. I'd be sorry to go back so soon as now, for to be sure this is a wonderful grand place, and I'm always very merry, though I'm often thinking of everybody in Ireland, when I would be sitting at my work. "*Mai deer*, how *doo* you *doo*?" says the lady of the house to me the other day; by that I made full sure that she was once at her birth from Ireland. She sends up stairs little Cossacks, boys of eight or nine years old, dressed beautiful, to play on the tourban and dance, to divert my mistress. Why they play and dance together, and the music never stirs out of their hands. It looks like a *quair* guitar. But there's a *dail* of English comes here, gentlemen and ladies enough.

I wish you good bye, Miss Henrietta. I like to think of you very much, and would be glad you wouldn't forget me no more than I forget yourself. This is all at present from your *sarvant* and also

ELEANOR CAVANAGH.

TO A. M. C.

Troitskoe, September 24th.

A FEW days ago I sent a letter to you, tagged with a promise at the end, that you should see me again at Philippi. So rather than belie my last parting word, I am come to you, this cold autumnal day, somewhat cross in myself, and shrunk and out of humour with the old style of reckoning for re-

tarding the charity of the stoves. Not that the weather, by the bye, is yet a particle colder than in England; and since cold is the order of the day, you may take this passing remark, that habit has no power of reconciling one to the inclemency of the climate, at least so says M., who felt the second winter like the evaporation of saltpetre upon the surface of her skin, in comparison with the first, which she scarcely minded; and now she is covered with wadded clothes, whilst I have no occasion for additional clothing; and the princess is utterly unconscious that it is not a summer's day.

I must growl now at another thing, which nothing upon earth can ever reconcile me to, and that is the distribution of time. We assemble at nine in the morning to drink our coffee, attended by filles-de-chambre; and then, what with lounging or talking, or music or walking, most frequently a couple of hours are spent Lord knows how; then, instead of picking up time from that to five o'clock, the thunder of the dinner-bell, like the death-signal to all occupation, sounds at half-past one or two o'clock at latest, and we assemble to solemnize our long repast, when each several dish of two courses and a dessert are not only carved on another table, and handed to you, but you are expected to eat of them all without mercy. This is one of the princess's peculiarities, who rather prides herself on her table, and on the produce of her farm, dairy, hothouses, &c. Dinner thus breaks in completely upon

the day, and it is difficult afterwards to return to one's morning's avocations. Tea assembles the family again at six o'clock, and a prodigious hot supper at half-past nine or ten.

Well, it can't be helped! So now to return to Moscow. Have you a mind to know the first impression I had on entering it? You are acquainted with Jerkoff and Frederick. Well, ma'am, the setting sunbeams danced with so much brilliancy on their erect ears, that I did not choose to present myself in my travelling dress, in that garish time of day, to Princess Daschkaw. Besides, I had predetermined not to arrive at her palace till nightfall, the hour when spirits walk. A few versts, therefore, before entering the town, feeling faint from fatigue and hunger, I desired Frederick to get me a little milk, which I began to lap at the cottage door where we had stopped; when a smart servant with a gold salver, a glass and decanter of sparkline wine, suddenly appeared, and pointing to a very handsome-looking chateau in the adjoining fields, desired Frederick to explain to me that the Princess Sibersky understood that I was the English lady on whose account Princess Daschkaw was come from the country, and that she felt herself too happy in being the first to welcome me to the gates of Moscow. The servant was sent backwards and forwards with many courteous messages, and the offer of a thousand civilities; amongst the rest, accommodation for the night, if I were indisposed to proceed further,

which I could only gratefully decline. Before proceeding on my journey, my attention was directed to the balcony of the chateau, where I espied the kind lady of the golden salver waving her handkerchief and bowing her welcomes and adieux. Was not this a pleasing specimen of the hospitality of the Muscovites, and the welcome which awaited me at the end of such a journey? But I am not now going to treat you with a detail of my first interview with the princess, and the cordial reception I met with. All this has been written before, and I have no taste for repetitions.

Russia, I was going to observe, is yet barbarous enough to be distinguished for this virtue of hospitality. She has many other nationalities, no doubt, but my short experience has not been able to distinguish any, except amongst the lower order of people; for with regard to the higher, I am sorry to say they seem to imitate the French in everything; and though the French manners are appropriate and suitable to themselves, I cannot endure the *singerie* of *Bruin*, when he frolics with the monkey on his back. Instead therefore, for example, of the dignified salutation of former times, that of bowing seriously to one another till their crowns met together, you are kissed on both cheeks with the appearance of transport, and are told mechanically how enchanted they are to make your acquaintance. The dress, too, is a bad imitation of the French; and they

have universally adopted their language. One is more surprised at finding this the case at Moscow than at Petersburg, for Petersburg is, in fact, a medley of foreigners. But fashion does the same in one place that commercial necessity does in the other; and in the midst of this adoption of French manners, customs, and language, there is something childishly silly in railing against Bonaparte and the French, when they cannot eat their dinners without a French cook to dress it; when they cannot educate their children without adventurers from Paris, in the shape of tutors and governesses; in a word, when every association of fashion, luxury, elegance, is drawn from France. Such arrant folly! Nevertheless, as an indifferent person, I confess I would much rather be in a French drawing-room than any other—a preference which a bad imitation forces on one's choice; for though the Russians cram one's body rarely, they send one's mind to France, utterly unconscious of degradation to themselves or their country. The national music, the national dancing, as well as the national salutation, the national dress, and the national language, have all sunk down to the ground, and none but slaves practise them.

How I abhor these general observations, arising from such circumscribed experience as mine, and I do not know what induces me to budge from the detail of gossip. Strange to say, this same gossip, too, would lead me chiefly to talk of Princess Daschkaw's

character, as I know more of hers than any one else's, which is diametrically opposite to every species of *singerie;* for if ever there was an original upon the face of the earth, it is herself. And yet the spirit of opposition bears me off from her and the groves of Troitskoe to Moscow and its golden cupolas, where I spent only three days: but to tell the truth, I am gasping to go back to it again. So to forestall our return, which will not be for two months, I will whisk you, *nolens volens*, to the handsome Widow Nibalsin's circular salon, so often mentioned in M.'s letters, into which the princess ushered M. and myself after the play.

Madame Nibalsin declared she was overwhelmed with mortification at not receiving me at a fête which she had designed for my arrival, but which our leaving town the next day prevented. "Mavra Romanovna," (that is, M.,) she added, "*est un ange!* and I cannot love and honour her too much. Your being her sister is a passport to my friendship and affection." She then threw her rosy fat arms about M.'s neck, and congratulated her, while congratulation was good, on my safety, promising me an infinity of friendship, and kissing me till I inwardly wished that one's friendship was not to be collared like a vagabond in that manner, whether one was in the humour for it or not. Don't be alarmed, for I nevertheless behaved very decently.

The princess, excellent oddity! set about manu-

facturing a prodigious Russian eulogium, which M. understood, and told me afterwards, puffing off my qualifications to such a degree, that all the circle about her were mute; whilst I, perfectly unconscious, not comprehending a syllable, strolled up and down the room with Anne Petroona, amusing myself with the paintings in fresco on the wall.

During supper, Princess Daschkaw frequently talked to me in English, and then translated everything into Russ for the benefit of the widow, embellishing all I said to a marvellous degree; for I was astonished at finding the most common-place observations of mine received, by virtue of my interpreter, with amazement and admiration of countenance on the part of the audience. These things I mention, to give you some notion of this dear princess; and though she uniformly behaves to us in this manner, she exacts a sort of deference, which surprised me excessively at first, from every one else around her. For example, no man, whatever be his rank, and however covered with decorations, presumes to sit down in her presence without being desired—a permission not always granted, for I have seen half-a-dozen princes stand throughout a whole visit. Once I saw several bowed out of the room when she got deadly tired of them; and after giving them her hand to kiss, they disappeared.

It never seems to enter her head or heart to disguise a sentiment or impulse of either; and therefore you may imagine what a privileged sort of

mortal she makes herself. The truth is sure to come out, whether agreeable or disagreeable, and lucky it is that she has sensibility and gentleness of nature, for if she had not, she would be a public scourge.

The first, by rank, sense, and habit, in every company, with her prerogative, becomes such a matter of course that nothing appears extraordinary which she does. I mentioned the circumstance of her transforming the drawing-room at Count ——'s into a bed-chamber for my accommodation. Well! another thing she did was to call out at supper for a basket, which she placed on her lap, and stored full of pine-apples, peaches, grapes, &c., ordering it to be left on her dressing-table; and guess what it was for—because she heard me say I was not fond of fruit, except before breakfast, and she would not break through a habit she had established, of waking me by one of her femmes-de-chambre with this offering—a ceremony she has never omitted a single morning since I came. I expostulated a little; but the answer I always get on these occasions is,—"*Reste tranquille,* my sweet friend, *dease 'ittle testimonies sont les besoins de mon cœur;* or else, *our younger sister must be humoured; she would scold me if I was not to do my duty.*

Oct. 1st.—No; 'tis a folly to talk; write I cannot here. You bid me keep a journal, for example, and no attempt of that kind have I made. Cold does not now molest me, for our stoves are lit, and our apartments excessively comfortable.

Well! what was I going to say? I believe I never mentioned Troitskoe, the place in which the princess delights, and where we now are. It is a fine place, entirely her own creation, situated in the midst of sixteen villages belonging to her. Three thousand peasants, "my subjects," as she calls them, live most happily under her absolute power; and never was human creature, on whom that power was bestowed, more kind-hearted in the exercise of it. The number of her servants, including those of all descriptions belonging to her establishment, is not less than two hundred; a hundred horses, two hundred cows, and everything else on this scale, kept for the use of herself and family, will give you an idea of the extent of it. The church, too, belongs to her, and is built at the back of the house. A wood belonging to the estate, nine miles long, and four broad, spreads itself on one side of the house, and comes nearly up to it, the outskirts of which are sometimes visited by wolves; and in it the princess and I lost our way yesterday evening for an hour and a half. A great quantity of land is laid out in shrubberies and pleasure-ground in the English taste, through which a beautiful river winds and serpentines amidst the whole estate. Troitskoe, however, is almost a dead flat, and it is to its cultivation and artificial embellishments alone that its beauty is attributable. The house is enormous, with wings on either side, which are connected by balconies raised on iron railings up to the second story.

In the midst of this immense establishment, and in the centre of riches and honours, I wish you were to see the princess go out to take a walk, or rather to look over her subjects. An old brown great coat, and a silk handkerchief about her neck worn to rags, is her dress; and well it may be worn to rags, for she has worn it eighteen years, and will continue to wear it as long as she lives, because it belonged to her friend Mrs. Hamilton. There is an originality in her appearance, in her manner of speaking, in her doing every description of thing, which distinguishes her from every creature I ever knew or heard of. She helps the masons to build walls, she assists with her own hands in making the roads, she feeds the cows, she composes music, she writes for the press; she talks out loud in the church, and corrects the priest if he is not devout; she talks out loud at her little theatre, and puts in the performers when they are out in their parts; she is a doctor, an apothecary, a surgeon, a farrier, a carpenter, a magistrate, a lawyer; in short, she daily practises every species of incongruity; corresponds with her brother, who holds the first post in the empire; with authors, with philosophers, with Jews, with poets, with her son, with all her relatives; and yet appears as if she had her time a burden on her hands. She gives me continually the idea of her being a fairy; and I protest it is not jokingly that I say so, for the impression never

quits me for a moment. There is a marvellous contradiction, too, in her speaking like a child, in her broken English, and with her unaccountable expressions, unconscious, as she seems, whether she is speaking French, English, or Russian, mingling them in every sentence. She speaks German and Italian equally well; but her pronunciation is not clear, which takes from the pleasure I have in her conversation.

She has promised to shew me the Empress Catherine's letters; and I have read a good part of the princess's life, written by herself. Indeed, it is necessary to qualify oneself with the knowledge of public things and characters during the time of Catherine the Second, for to these the princess perpetually alludes; and her mind wanders so naturally back to the court, and study, and toilet, and boudoir of that empress, that I am beginning to fancy myself a party concerned in the revolution. By the bye, the principal salon here is ornamented with a colossal picture of Catherine on horseback in uniform; besides this, there are portraits of her in every room.

Yesterday morning, when I went down to breakfast, I found the princess *fuming* over a herring, which she was preparing for me to swallow, as I had been heard to complain, in the secret recesses of my castle, of an uncomfortable feel in the stomach. The fairy knew it by inspiration, and did cause a fish to rise from its troubled waters and dissipate, per force of magic, my derangement. I happened to come

down before M., and the flash of terror that appeared in the princess's eyes frightened me out of my wits for a moment. On inquiry, it proved to be anguish at the notion of M.'s being probably unwell; and her expression was, "*De taught* cut my heart like a sharp knife." I am sure you must by this time be heartily tired of the castle and its fairy, and we will leave them.

Oct. 2.—Good bye to you, and for many a long day, for I am so mortified in being obliged to send such broken, scatter-brained epistles, that I shall not put pen to paper again whilst I remain at Troitskoe, unless to announce my petrifaction, if it take place, according to promise. Petrifaction brings hot water into my head, and this reminds me of the bath establishment in the shrubbery here, which is most perfectly arranged. Two women have nothing else to do but to heat the furnace and keep everything in order; and you know bathing is with the Russians, as with the Turks, a religious observance, as not one of them would or could profane the church by not being in the hot bath the night before they entered it. This secures an universal ablution every Saturday regularly. The bath here has three separate chambers; in one of them is a gradation of stairs, by means of which the heat of the vapour bath is increased, if you like it. There is also a great tub, in which you sit up to your chin, (and the ceremony is to scour you with horseradish till you smart, and then with soap,) first

having had your legs pickled in a composition of wormwood, nettles, grass-seed, mint, and horse-radish. I have gone through all this operation several times. After bathing, the princess goes to bed, one being prepared in an adjoining room; but I go and walk about, and only feel the stronger for it.

The princess, dear woman, has promised me—what with any one else would be nothing, and yet from her methodical and clock-work habits is a real sacrifice—to leave Troitskoe two days sooner than she ever did before, in order to go to Moscow to shew me the lions. She says, "Count Alexis Orloff shall give a ball." On these occasions she sends her order, and the ball is given as a matter of course. She promises, too, to take me to the Kremlin; "and I shall desire," she adds, "the Archbishop of Georgia to prepare a feast for the occasion." There never were strangers, to be sure, so delightfully circumstanced for seeing everything that is to be seen as ourselves.

I am really longing to go to Moscow. Amongst other little projects, the princess wished to take me into Poland in the spring; but this I have sturdily opposed. Travelling I have long known to be inconvenient to her, and dangerous to her internal disorders. On this account I entreated her, in a letter from St. Petersburg, to abandon her idea of leaving Troitskoe to meet me; but nothing could stop her, nor any selfish consideration impede for

one moment her resolution of giving me the reception she had designed.

Don't irritate me by saying you suppose I am beginning to speak the language. *No!* Let that satisfy you for ever. I feel my power of *duncishness* increase daily; my powers of idleness, and my powers of hopelessness on everything that's good. Not so M.; she writes and speaks Russ wonderfully; the princess teaches her, and they correspond almost every day in Russian notes. So now good bye; I see the fairy beckoning me with her wand, and nobody knows what necromancy she is after. Adieu!

EXTRACT OF A LETTER TO THE SAME.

Before I go to *roost*, I come to tell you that I have received no letters; so now good-night, unless, perchance, you choose to sit in my room whilst I am going to bed. I don't desire your company, however; but what must be, must be; and so for your edification, look at those five high pillows at the head of my iron bedstead. 'Tis not the fashion to have bolsters; so what can I do? There I am almost upright in my bed, every night of my life, tucked in as tight as a mummy. Those tiles with china flowers are not put there for mere ornament. No; they appertain to the stove which they cover, and which in revenge I cover all over with my clean linen, as there is no other means of

airing my clothes. The clumsy boots you see yonder belong to no man; they are no other than what I wore this evening out in the traineau, as well as that dove-coloured *Gros de Tours* pelisse, with sable collar as large as a muff; ay, and that wadded cloak into the bargain. Will you never be gone? The reason why the door opposite the one you enter at is skulking behind that green-baize curtain is, because it is an enormous door, added since the winter began, as well as those additional window frames. Well, well! and that green tea-pot? Why, 'tis nettle tea, which I am ordered to drink for my cough. The round inlaid table, which stands at my bed-side covered over with books? Mercy on us! When I wake in the morning, before Eleanor comes into my room, is there any harm in having the history of the country one is in to read? And that great bottle, from the contents of which you are scouring your face and hands? Nothing more or less than camphor and rose-water, to be used as preparative to a lump of ice with which one's eyes are to be washed in the morning. Now, in the name of patience, good-night to you.

TO A. W.

Troitskoe, Dec. 2nd, 1805.

Hold your tongue, Alicia, I know I am in Russia, and that you are pleased to fancy I have been sent hither for your edification and amusement, as a

sweep is hustled up the chimney to hoot and squeak from the top of the house, and flourish his brush as a symbol of his victory to the blackguards in the streets. Once for all, I tell you, I can neither hoot, nor squeak, nor flourish my brush, nor grin with triumph, nor shake my bag of soot about the neighbourhood — no; not even if you were to burn a fagot at my heels, and send me scrambling up the chimney for my life. Everything touching myself, in addition to what you before knew, I have already written; and I protest nothing within the pale of truth remains for me to relate which can add one iota to your former information. 'Tis therefore to punish your unreasonableness, not from any other or better motive, that I begin to answer your letter of the 5th of October, at Troitskoe rather than at Moscow, whither we shall be going in eleven days, and where some variety must naturally present itself.

Whatever the monotony of our Arcadian lives in this sequestered castle offers, shall act as the sleepy incentive to this epistle; for not one inch shall your imagination budge beyond the blank circumference of snow which encircles our wide horizon, and which the shroudings of night and nakedness of day alone diversify to our view. This sounds, perhaps, more dreary than it really is; for though I am in a wild mansion in the extremities of Europe, imprisoned by the implacability of winter, and though I am, through these circumstances, abso-

lutely unable to manufacture epistles, yet I am marvellously well able to perform the more necessary functions of the day, and share the common fate of other roots. For smothered as I am under mountains of drifted snow, I contemplate the fairy blossoms which futurity may expand and colour, though now, like other crocuses and daffodils, I submit to the vegetation of a mere bulbous.

But, marry come up with my flowery images! Put up the tail of your gown about your shoulders, and follow me about this house for your amusement, and look at the apartments; or, if you prefer it, sit down upon the sofa with your legs under you like the Russian dames, and tell fortunes upon the cards—a very essential accomplishment amongst the enlightened in this bright *aurora borealis*.

Nature here looks like a thin outline of pen and ink on a sheet of white paper,—every object is so meagre and cold, and sketched on so undiversified a white. Nevertheless, every day after dinner, at three o'clock, the kibitka or traineau is at the door. The former machine resembles in shape an infant's cradle, which is lined with bear-skin, with a covering of leather to the front. In this you may cram me if you please, flanked by M. and Anna Petrovna; or, more properly speaking, you may stow away three enormous bundles; for what with shawls, shubas, and wadded cloaks, it would be difficult to organize us into either shape or form. You may remark, too, the accoutrements of our

attendants, Gabriel, Petruchio, Theodore, and Ivan; their shubas tied round their waists with coloured scarfs, and high, black, grenadier-looking caps upon their heads. These citadels of caps, however, erected against the common enemy, the cold, are at every moment overset by the spirit of allegiance; for even in the heaviest falls of snow, the poor fellows receive every word which is addressed to them bare-headed; and a long direction is sure of being well thatched within the skull by a roof of snow, which they unconsciously shake off, and then replace their cap with equal indifference.

I told you, I believe, that Troitskoe is circumstanced like a sprig of lily of the valley; that is, the white stuccoed house is shaded with a dark-spreading forest. Into this we daily penetrate on our sledges, drawn by three horses abreast, at full speed, surging through the snow like a boat breaking through the waves, and casting up a sparkling spray, as though we moved through an atmosphere of diamonds. The opening of the forest is like the charnel-house of nature; every tree rattles like a bleached skeleton — moaning, hollow, gaunt, and menacing—till we lose the apparition by bursting our way amidst towering firs, whose shafts swell into columns of snow, and flit in thousands of marble pillars before our watery eyes, which give, perhaps, an illusive medium to reality. The underwood, feathered like swan's down on the wiry branches, trembles under the weight of snow-tufts,

like bunches of the Gueldres rose; so that, in this instance, winter outvies the garlands of the brightest summer.

Nor is the gilding of the setting sun less magic in its effect, when an horizontal beam, striking upon the snow, seems to awaken all the treasures of Golconda, and the ground blazes in sapphires, emeralds, amethysts, opals, and brilliants.

The solitude of the forest is seldom interrupted in our course, except by wood-cutters, looking like satyrs rather than human beings, whose endless beards, clogged in snow and lengthened by icicles, crackle in responsive measure to their hatchet strokes. The appearance, however, of the ladies of the castle suspends all labour; and till the traineau is out of sight, a circle of those shaggy satyrs, clothed in the skins of beasts, with fur night-caps in their *paws*, assemble to shew their devotion and reverence by bowing repeatedly their *bear* heads to the ground.

Well, are you tired of the forest, and are you punished for your inquisitiveness? See what it is to extort truth from travellers. Should the tingling of your curiosity, however, so uncontrollably overcome your weariness that you must needs inquire what is that volume of smoke issuing from that heap of snow, learn that what appears to your eyes but the heaving of the ground, is in fact a bath, which is heated every Saturday for the benefit of the families in the adjoining cottages. You per-

ceive, as we drive in by the back of the house, that wide range of buildings which hems in the lawn circularly, and in the midst of which the church stands. These must be accounted for as appurtenances to the castle, or else you might reasonably mistake it for a little town. One of them is a theatre; another, a riding-school; a third, an infirmary; a fourth, the stables; a fifth, the steward's house; a sixth, a house for guests; a seventh, eighth, and ninth, for servants; and so on.

Mercy on us, what a wilderness of a hall is here; and no wonder, when it is the eternal passage of a swarm of servants. You must let that triangular-looking Stepouska, blinking behind his cravat, help you off with your mufflements, whilst Athanasius draws off your fur boots, and whilst Vinceslaus, Massagee, Kusma, Bisilkin, Vassilee, Kashan, Proka, Antoine, Timothée, and half a score others of different shapes and colours, run to usher you into the dining-room, and so from the left of it into the usual sitting-room.

That portrait at the head of the room, hanging over the sofa, is Princess Daschkaw's husband, who was reckoned the beauty of his time, and died when he was only six-and-twenty years of age. That commanding-looking dame, with eagles embroidered on her train, and an ermine robe, is Catherine the Second; and opposite is her grandson, the Emperor Alexander. So much for pictures. At the upper end of the room, sitting in an

arm-chair, with a little table before her, inlaid like a chess-board, lounging in a purple silk dressing-gown, and white cambric man's night-cap, with her black dog *Fidelle* sleeping on a cushion at her feet, is the princess! She is waiting for our return home, as this evening is to be dedicated to reading over some dozen letters tied up in that great paper parcel, part of the correspondence which passed between the Empress Catherine and herself, from the time she was eighteen years of age till she resigned the Academy. These subjects, as ripping up a life which is almost past, gives a painful sort of agitated animation to her countenance; and I long till it is all over. Anna Petroona has already taken up her station, and prepared her great worsted knitting.

* * * * *

Sunday, December 7th.—Five days, you will perceive, have passed since the interruption which made me break off the above; during which, St. Catherine, the patron saint of Princess Daschkaw, has walked in to gather her taxes, and exact her perquisites, both spiritual and temporal. The princess and I being namesakes, she was determined this fête should be doubly celebrated. Accordingly, on the eve of the day, a solemn mass was held in the great dining-hall, the priests and chanters being duly assembled with the incense and consecrated pictures. *Bog* was brilliantly illuminated in his nook; and the silver effigy of St. Catherine was reflected before a

large mirror, in all the blaze of her tributary lamps. After this ceremony was ended, every one present of every description pressed forward with their congratulations and offerings. Peasants lined the hall, each with a large loaf of bread covered with a heap of salt, which they presented as a mark of homage, and some added a little plate of apples to enhance the tribute. The princess and I next exchanged presents, and both received those of M. and Anna Petrovna. That night's post brought congratulatory epistles from all the princess's relations in Moscow. So far for the eve of St. Catherine.

The next day we went to church, and had appropriate service for the occasion. . Our party was now increased by the arrival of Prince Daschkaw, M. de Postnicoff, Count Santi a nephew of the princess, General Yellogin and his family, together with a good many of the neighbours. You may fancy our next appearance at a great dinner, the princess sitting at the head of the table, and I at her right hand. We were to receive the compliments of the company conjointly, which were offered in Russ, French, and English; every one standing up, and, with a bumper of champagne, congratulating us on our saint, and drinking to our health on the return of the day. Music and cards passed away the evening; so here we are, just as we were, going to take a drive in the forest. On Friday we go to Moscow; till then you are likely to put up with what you find at Troitskoe.

Monday, December 8th.—If the idea of the festive dinner I have been describing should make you ravenous, you have only to go down stairs and take your seat at the great square board. Eat first, if you please, some egg-patès with your soup, and then drink *hydromel* to wash them down, or else *quass*. Pray take a little caviar, the roe of sturgeon. Fish soup you perhaps prefer; cutlets, fowls, game, vegetables, are next at your service; and forget not to eat salt cucumber with your roast meat. What do you think of pig and curdled cream? and then apple-bread, or raw apples from the Crimea, or the Siberian or the transparent apples, or the Kiow sweetmeat, or honeycomb, or preserved rose leaves, or pickled plums.

In the name of goodness, eat no more! for in six or seven hours you will have to sit down to just such another dinner, under the name of supper; so unless you take your departure, you must, whilst they are perfuming the room, which suffocates me, wander down the long passage into the princess's cabinet, sweet, dear old woman! as I may most truly say; for the affectionate distinction and animated cordiality which have accompanied every word and action of hers towards me ever since I first saw her have never had one moment's interruption. She calls me the sister of her choice; and, added to the playfulness of her countenance and manner whenever she addresses me, her ingenuity appears restless in searching for cir-

cumstances to commend and flatter, in everything touching myself, my family, or my country.

I do her but common justice in mentioning these things, yet, trust me, I feel *myself* very little involved in the main spring of her conduct; for being M.'s sister is everything to irradiate humanity. Often she exclaims with devotion when she looks at her, "Dere is de mark of Heaven's best love to me; my darling child sought me out on de credit of my name, and came by herself from distant country on de faith of my character. Now do tell me, *sister Kaiety*, what shall I ever do to prove my love and gratitude to her?" Every three or four days I am told the story over and over again, with renewed energy. Perhaps you do not know that I mean my own name, by spelling as she pronounces it in her extraordinary English, "*sister Kaiety;*" but the drollery this gives to her conversation is inexpressible. I was called into her cabinet the other day, to read the dedication she has just finished to M. of her history. It is written beautifully; and the affection, admiration, gratitude, enthusiasm, which it breathes, is one of the most noble testimonials that one individual can offer to another.

I have, since I came here, often thought what a task it would be to attempt to draw the character of the Princess Daschkaw. For my part, I think it would be impossible. Such are her peculiarities

and inextricable varieties, that the result would only appear like a whisp of human contradictions. 'Tis the stuff we are all made of, to be sure; but nevertheless nothing is more foreign from the thing itself than the raw materials of which it is made; and woe betide individuality the moment one begins to generalize. You will always conceive her a piece of perfection, when you take my experience of her; just as you would suppose Europe a paradise if you never lived out of Italy, and judged of the rest accordingly. But she has as many climates to her mind, as many splinters of insulation, as many oceans of agitated uncertainty, as many Ætnas of destructive fire, and as many wild wastes of blighted cultivation, as exist in any quarter of the globe. I confess, it seems to me she would be most in her element at the helm of the state, or generalissimo of the army, or farmer-general of the empire. In fact, she was born for business on a grand scale,—which is far from irreconcilable with the life of a woman who at eighteen headed a revolution, and who for twelve years afterwards governed an academy of arts and sciences.

Monday night.—You will hardly believe me when I say the princess has no sense of the ridiculous. I don't think she comprehends a caricature even in language. A little instance passed yesterday at dinner. She told M. it was a shame for her not to take snuff, as she had seven or eight imperial

boxes, and jokingly asked me what punishment she should inflict. To this Anna Petrovna and I profoundly suggested that the princess should serve M.'s nose as she treats her favourite shrubs in the garden—crop it, till as many sprang up in a cluster as she had gorgeous snuff-boxes. The princess looked ready to cry, and thought us both no better than butchers. She instantly turned the conversation.

Saturday night, Moscow, December 15th.—We are just arrived, after the most distressing journey I ever made; but our joy at finding ourselves in Moscow is sadly alloyed by the news which has reached the princess, that her favourite brother, the grand chancellor, is not expected to live. Her son is with him; and unless more favourable accounts arrive, I suppose we shall go to Andreoffsky, Count Worontzow's place, where he now is, nearly two hundred versts from Moscow. This is a dreadful shock! I must go to bed, my bones being shaken to a jelly on broken roads, and of course on hills and valleys of ice.

TO A. W.

Moscow, 18th Feb. 1806.

I KNOW I am unsatisfactory, and that I write but seldom; and seldom as it is, far from responsive to the redundancy of your expectations, springing, no

doubt, from that most amiable of sources, anxiety about my precious health, in these regions of white, where, amidst the sons and daughters of Winter, I freeze in unrelenting snow. But amidst the upbraidings of your spirit, if your conscience is not absolutely turned into a rhinoceros, you must remember that my parting word, yea, my dying speech, was but a lively prognostication of what my behaviour has duly verified, and will continue to verify, till the returning sun has thawed a passage for me across the Baltic, and replaces me in my gazebo,—where, bending like a willow over Shandon steeple, my days, leaf by leaf, will drop into the tomb.

So far for the past and future; but for the blooming present, ingratitude must not sully it by the want of an appropriate acknowledgment and praise of your fourfold virtues; for so your epistles are to be appreciated. The day before yesterday I received your last, written from Wood Hill, the 28th of December; and to acknowledge it, as well as one of H.'s of the same date, and several others which, though long delayed, have safely reached their destination, am I now come, though in the midst of some untoward interruptions. When these letters made their appearance at one o'clock, we were hurrying on our gloves and cloaks, the coach waiting at the door to take us to dinner at General Tutleman's, one of the ci-devant governors of Poland; so we were obliged to cram them into our

reticules; and though we had six versts to drive, yet so like is sledge-driving, when the way is broken, to a ship in a storm, that every effort to break the seals and read the letters was unavailing. You may therefore picture me, when the card-tables were formed, as they usually are half an hour before dinner, retiring to the end of the sixth apartment, (which was a temple of marble with a dome of looking-glass reflecting me and my epistles on our heads,) and reading for the first time the long-wished-for budget.

I was in the midst of your letter, when Prince Yousoupoff came to hand me in to dinner; and while I walked with him, in all his dignities of decorations, through suites of rooms, winter gardens, and galleries, to the sound of music, I had leisure to ruminate on the blissful pictures which you had conjured up before my mind. But let me talk of dinner now, and not of your letter, which robbed me of mine; and as a Christian return, accept the offering of twenty-seven feasts—the number of dinnerings we have figured at since the 6th of January, our Christmas-day.

Of these, as you may conclude, I am somewhat tired. The luxuries and magnificence which surround us, when the gloss of novelty is over, soon lose their effect; and the unnatural hours which are kept tend sadly to spoil the enjoyment one might expect. I will not enter into any particular detail, because I have gone precisely the same circle which

is registered in M.'s letters. The effect left upon my imagination is that of having flitted among the ghosts of the court of Catherine. Moscow is the imperial political Elysium of Russia. All those whose power existed in the days of Catherine and of Paul, and all those who are discarded, or conceived to be superannuated by Alexander, here, in this lazy, idle, magnificent Asiatic town, hold an *ideal* consequence, awarded by courtesy alone; for all the effective influence has long since passed as an inheritance to their successors, who bask in the sunshine of the existing court, and rule the realm at Petersburg. Nevertheless, the ruffled, decorated phantom of Prince Galitzin, grand-chamberlain in the reign of Catherine, retains its orders, its stars, and its ribands, which, added to the weight of fourscore years and ten, bend it double to the ground. It wears on its bones its key of diamonds, its bag and embroidery, and all its glittering baubles, and receives the homage of its brother ghosts, who in former days shared with it the honours of the state.

Another of these gaudy *Revenants* is Count Ostroman, grand-chancellor of the empire during the same period. The orders of St. George, of St. Alexander Neffsky, and St. Volodimer, &c., hang over it in red, blue, and various-coloured stripes. Eighty-three years have frozen in a pyramid on his head; and his gibbering skeleton rattles in his coach and eight, with outriders, dines with his Heyducs

behind his chair, and exacts the same etiquette from courtesy which was awarded him by right in his effective days of imperial favour.

Count Alexis Orloff, who was grand-admiral in the time of Catherine, is richer than any prince in Christendom, and revels in Asiatic luxury. The hand which strangled Peter the Third is covered with its recompence of brilliants, amidst which the portrait of Catherine smiles in eternal gratitude. This is another of our Moscow ghosts; and another is General Korsikoff, a surviving favourite, who may be called a diamond vision, and who, in the midst of wrinkles, cherishes the remembrance of that past distinction which drew on him the envy of his country. Prince B——, Prince N——, and other conspirators of 1762, and of later times, trundle about their paunches and patriotism, their swords and bags, and all the insignia of their former greatness. In short, the grandees—and in this circle, alas, we only move—are, as I said before, of another world; and yet the same important gossip of court folly, the same vanity, the same puffed-up pride, the same ostentation sways them, and creates their happiness or misery, as if the grave did not yawn beneath their tottering feet to menace them, as it hourly does, with an earthly oblivion of their brocaded existence.

I confess I am heartily sick of the name of the *Great Catherine*, from this group of displaced place dotards; for she is praised uniformly with a reference to their own services.

These specimens of the Muscovites are mingled, to be sure, with wives and daughters, and granddaughters, beautifully dressed, sitting in gilded boudoirs, with slaves dancing before them, burning perfumes, and handing sweetmeats to their visitors; and though a sort of French exterior is universal, and the French language the language of society, the dress the same, and the youngsters educated by French mademoiselles and French abbés, yet they are for the most part neither well bred nor agreeable women, but obviously imitators, and, as such, overacting the externals, without having the slightest pretension to that soothing suavity of manner so generally prevalent and pleasing in France. When the Moscow women have eyed you from head to foot, have kissed you four or six times instead of twice, recommended themselves to your eternal friendship, told you, in a riotous tone and abrupt expression, that you are charming, inquired the price of each article of your dress, and speculated on the brilliancy of the next assembly of the nobles, there is nothing more to be hoped for. There scarcely seems to be an idea beyond this, except to abuse the vulgarity of the Russian jewellers, and to praise the perfection of the French.

One general observation I have made is, that in their comparisons of the English and French, the prejudices of the Muscovites, and I fancy I may say of the Russians in general, are all in favour of the latter practically, though they all rail at Buona-

parte, and lament Lord Nelson. The English nation abstractedly is respected; but its practices are unknown, its language rarely spoken, its fashions disliked, and the individuals criticised in a manner different from those of any other country. Those young English travellers who are admired, get credit for what is unusual in their own country—such as waltzing well, speaking German and Russ, calling every one "your highness and your excellency," and complimenting without mercy everything Russian, in spite of the preference which they themselves give to French usages.

Here are a couple of instances of the effect of novelty on the proud bears: a princess has run off with Signor ——, an Italian painter; and a nephew of Princess Daschkaw, M. de ——, has married the daughter of a French tutor. Instruction is so little attended to here, especially among the women, that a few hackneyed sophisms with them is looked upon as the black art. So it was in the case of Signor ——, a man of sixty, who turned Princess ——'s head at twenty-nine, by professing himself an atheist, and a believer in "Berkley's Visionary System of Shadows." Every one thought him an inspired genius, and threw open their palaces to him. I saw him once, and took him for a quack mountebank doctor. Three weeks afterwards, he went to the Archbishop of Moscow for a licence, and on being asked what religion he was of, he laughed, and said, "*any*, or *none*." This produced

a growl; however, he turned Greek, and was married. Four large fat princes cried to me, in relating the disgrace. It was but a nine days' wonder, and will serve as a precedent to futurity.

The advance of accomplishments in the present age is very remarkable, in the difference to be observed between the young women and their mamas in acquisitions of this nature. The latter are little skilled in languages, but are almost always gamesters; and if the trophies of their celebrity happen to be recorded with eclat in the annals of gallantry, they seem to prove no great impediment to their consideration in the *beau monde*.

I don't know how comparison might serve on this subject. In Moscow we only know such personages as are in London the first peers of the realm, the Duchess of Gordon, Devonshire, &c. As to such innocent, humble, rational, rosy, white-robed nymphs as you, the L's, the P's, and the G's, there is no such rank in society here, and consequently no such beings. The more, in fact, I see of these matters, the less I am surprised at Englishmen being in such a hurry to marry as soon as they return from their travels. There is that gentlemanlike, fine young man S——n, who stared poverty in the face to marry my favourite Sarah C——; and he has gone the round of nations. There is Lord K——, and forty others I could name. But in one word, to use Princess Daschkaw's expression upon this subject, "*I do tink God Almighty himself might*

be proud when he says, I have made de English woman." She is not, however, half so fond of English *men*.

The houses here are perfectly magnificent; the tables groaning under the luxuries of the four seasons; and bands of music accompanying, or rather symphonising, every morsel you place between your lips.. To give you a sketch of General Knoring's style of living may serve as a sample of the rest. He served twenty years on the confines of Russia, Georgia, and Persia; and to *serve* in Russia is to have the distinction allotted to birth and fashion elsewhere.

On arriving, we were ushered into the antechamber, where thirty or forty servants in rich liveries disencumbered us of our pelisses, flannel boots, &c. Then the general, with old-fashioned courtliness, was seen at the end of a gorgeous suite of painted and lustered rooms, reflected in mirrors at every side, and head over heels from the glasses on the ceilings, shuffling towards us, in a blaze of orders, bowing at every step, and advancing to receive us at the first door of entry from the antechamber. He, having kissed our hands, and we his forehead, conducted us through brilliant rooms, strange to say, without carpets, till we reached the dejeunè—a table laid out with liqueurs, caviar, horse radish, cheese, and pickled herrings—round which the company stand and eat a morsel now and then, till they

sit down to cards, at which they usually remain till between two and three o'clock. Every gentleman then offers his elbow to a lady, when, in a procession of twenty or thirty couple, they solemnly walk to the sound of music, and seat themselves to a three hours' banquet. All the femmes de chambre, forming a band of damsels, stand in a group at the door, singing national airs, accompanied by violins and other musical instruments. A little Chinese and a negro boy, in their appropriate dresses, a Circassian girl, in the beautiful costume of her country, and a Calmuck in that of a Calmuck princess—all supernumerary appendages of the family—as well as a few others, slaves taken in battle, or sent as presents—ran about the table to amuse the company, sometimes sung, sometimes romped, sometimes were kissed and rewarded with sweetmeats.

When we retired to the drawing-rooms in the same procession in which we entered the dining-room, or rather gallery, our entertainment was to have these and other dancing girls perform a variety of dances before us, whilst we sat on divans sipping coffee, and ordering different national exhibitions to be performed, as our curiosity prompted. This you perceive is entirely in the Asiatic taste. Candles are brought, lustres lit, transparencies dropped instead of shutters, and evening just beginning to commence, when every one departs and leaves the family to themselves. We are then rolled up, and

driven home about six or half-past six o'clock, precisely in the state of mind not to relish cold, waste, empty apartments.

* * * * * * *

Alas! our sand is nearly run at Moscow;—which I am grievously sorry for. It is warmer here than at Troitskoe, and scarcely a day has passed that M. and I have not trudged round the house in the snow for an hour, to the amazement of the Russians, who never put foot to ground in winter by way of healthful exercise.

I must tell you of a curious entertainment which we witnessed about three weeks ago. I was deploring to the princess the circumstance of losing sight of many nationalities, from our moving too high in the circle of society;—such as the domestic manners of the merchants, shopkeepers, &c. In one instance, at least, she good-naturedly promised my curiosity should be gratified; and a day was accordingly appointed, when a party of us, sixteen or seventeen in number, were to dine at the most celebrated tavern in Moscow. Every dish at table was served in the Russian style—not less, I dare say, than one hundred, and all peculiar to the country. To make the matter complete, la maitresse d'hotel, dressed in gold embroidery and diamonds, sat at the head of the table, with her face, neck, and arms, painted like a doll. This sort of painting is a national usage, and has been so ever since Russia was in existence. Our attendants, to the number

of forty, were bearded men, dressed in yellow, purple, and party-coloured shirts, tucked up at the wrists, so as to leave half of their arms naked, and without coats or waistcoats. There was a boy who played on the organ, and who, for the permission to do so, paid the master of the tavern several hundred roubles a year, which shews how much the tavern was frequented, and how music is here considered a necessary of life. After coffee, a group of gipsies was brought for our amusement, dressed in gold brocaded shawls, tied on one shoulder, and with earrings formed of various coins. How beautifully they danced the Bohemian and Egyptian dances, calling to one's recollection the dancing figures of Herculaneum! At some moments, when fear was to be expressed, their vivacity bordered on frenzy; and their movements, accompanied by abrupt cries, gave so wild and preternatural an effect, that it was difficult to imagine them inhabitants of this drowsy planet.

I am just come up stairs from some of the usual visitors; and I am grown so accustomed to their ways, that my observation is blunted—otherwise how different I should think their manners in a hundred things to what I have seen elsewhere. No man ever dares to sit down in the presence of his superiors, without being ordered. This minute the princess is sitting in her divan, talking ALL; and half-a-dozen princes are standing, cap in hand, before her. Those of small pretensions seldom ad-

vance beyond the door, where they stand pinioned to their three-cocked hats, and relieving their fatigue sometimes on one foot, sometimes on the other.

Subordination holds a sovereign sway at Moscow; and the term *gentleman* here possesses no such equalizing power as to banish the degrees of imperial favour from the mind of any individual I have ever met with. Old wizards of men therefore, and old crones of women, are here omnipotent, having naturally more ribbons to exhibit, and more honours to boast, than the youngers. As to young men of agreeability and fashion, there are very few, since most of that description are either pushing their fortunes about the court in Petersburg, or in the armies. A fry of unfledged boys are their substitutes, who block up the door-ways, stiff in powder and pomatum and new clothes, with their French tutors watching the effect of their first hopeful bow and scrape into the awful circle of their superiors. The Lord pity the folly of this round world, and me in the middle of it, like a toad within a stone!

I am come to the end of my paper without thanking you for all your news; but I shall not make my letter a paraphrase on yours, lest I should get it all back again by force of example. Look at the seal of this letter; yesterday the princess gave it me. The seven stars, or great bear of the north, is herself; and the flame on the altar is the sentiment she has lit up in me. It is a beautiful seal, cut on a precious stone. Adieu!

LETTER TO THE REV. J. C.

* * * And in return for your communication, I will talk to you of some matters of a similar nature which I have witnessed in Russia—marriages and deaths; endeavouring in the former instance to point my gossip toward that region of your memory where classic lore exists. Since the eighth or ninth century, marriage, it seems, has received the sacerdotal benediction. Formerly it had three distinct offices, now consolidated into one; first, the betrothing with rings, or recording the pledges; second, the matrimonial coronation; and, third, the dissolving the crowns on the eighth day. This will recal to you what poets sing of Roman nuptials—the contract—the hymeneal torch—the veil—the garland of flowers.

You must now therefore conjure up a church encircled by bearded villagers clad in sheep skins, their legs twisted round with straw, and gauntlets on their hands. While they wait the arrival of the bride and bridegroom, they interchange their usual demonstrations of good will, flouncing their arms round one another's shoulders, and beard to beard, each clumsy neighbour kissing the other with the most perfect regard. As the groundwork of this picture is snow, you may see them break off from these embraces, to *whack* their hands against their leathern sides, or fumble for their noses; or to leave the print of their sculls on the ground; crossing

themselves at the same time with all their might and main, whenever it occurs to them that they are standing before a church. A dozen kibitkas, like large cradles, slide on their sledges up towards the porch, where the priest is placed to receive them, arrayed in his epitrachelion; when out *flump* the bride and bridegroom, trundling under the weight of their clothes, and followed by every relative they have on the face of the earth, except the father and mother of the bride, who stay at home to lament her loss. You may now fancy a forest in a storm; so many different coloured beards, wild and grisly, wave up and down, and so many arms fly in every direction, in all the energy of bowing, crossing, and hurrying towards the porch. The priest receives the happy pair within the church; and having blessed them, making the sign of the cross upon their heads, gives them lighted tapers, and conducts them to a sort of tripod at a distance from the high altar, where he again pronounces a benediction, swinging incense from a massive censer, and clouding them in a cross of smoke.

Prayers are then chaunted by the deacons; and two rings are brought, with which they are crossed on the forehead, and which, on receiving them from the priest, they interchange, giving them first to the attendant paranymphi and bridesmaids, who return them to the bride and bridegroom, on whose hands they then remain for life. Bending down their heads and tapers to the ground, this act

is solemnized by the priest, who repeats the following prayer :—

"Thou, O Lord, hast shewn us that such pledges should be given, and received, and confirmed! By a *ring*, power was given unto Joseph in Egypt. By a *ring*, Daniel was honoured in Babylon. The truth was discovered with respect to Tamar by a *ring*; and by a *ring*, our heavenly Father shewed his kindness to his repentant Son. Put on this ring on his right hand, saith he, and kill the fatted calf, and let us eat, drink, and be merry. Let this ceremony be blessed, O Lord, which we now perform, of putting on the *ring*, with thy heavenly benediction; and let thine angels go before them all the days of their life."

After this part of the ceremony, the bride being first unveiled, they are solemnly crowned, and walk in slow procession round and round the altar, the priest holding each by the hand, followed by their paranymphi and other attendants, every one of the hymeneal group carrying flaming tapers, and joining in the hymns and chaunts which now resound through the church. As symbolical of their sharing the common bitter lot of life, a cup of liquor is presented to the nuptial pair, which they sip, and interchange five times, till they have drank it to the dregs; and, lastly, they contemplate themselves in a mirror which the priest presents. The crowns are then taken off, the bride is enveloped in a thick white veil, and the final benediction is pronounced.

We had next to steer our way through the tide of consanguinity which bore the downcast bride to a remote corner of the temple, where her veil is taken off by a swarm of old women, who comb her hair before the congregation, and after braiding it,—the bridegroom sitting by her side with a taper in his hand, apparently in a profound melancholy,—the head-dress which conceals the tresses, and thus distinguishes the matron, is put on, and she is borne home in triumph to the house of her husband. Here she is instantly placed at the head of a banquet, which she assists in dispensing without partaking of it herself, and countenances the broad good-humour which prevails,—except among her young female companions, who mourn in floods of tears the loss of their associate, whose praises they sing, and whose marriage they bewail as a sure dissolution of friendship.

I have been describing, as you will perceive, a village marriage; the only sort of one which I was desirous of seeing, having remarked that, in order to witness national peculiarities, one must sink a little in the scale of society. But have you a mind to change the scene, and wander among the tombs? Though death is in my pen, I would not wish to menace you with melancholy; for the grandee whom I followed to the grave was one indeed to excite reflection, but no sorrowful regrets. He was a superannuated courtier, without character, without consideration, without friends;

knowing nothing of nature beyond the embroidered flowers on his brocade; having no higher elevation of mind than the tenacity of precedence; and leaving no other vestage in this world than a passing cloud.

I will not dwell on the scene which took place in his palace, because it would be in part a repetition of what occurred afterwards in the church. Here he lay exposed in the middle of the congregation, surrounded by a band of priests with flaming torches, so numerous as to form a halo about his coffin. The troparions, retenia, prayers, benedictions, crossings, and incense, filled up the period between the entrance of the corpse and the commencement of high mass. After this was ended, the priests, returning from the altar, again encircled the coffin, and joined in the following exclamation:—

"What pleasure of life is unmixed with sorrow! What glory upon earth is of long continuance! Where are the affections of the world,—where the vain dream of temporary delights! Where gold and silver! Where the multitude and din of attendants! All are dust and ashes! All a shadow that passeth away! Come, then, let us address the immortal King. O Lord, vouchsafe thy blessings to thy departed servant, and grant him repose in thy everlasting beatitude. Ah me! what struggles does the parting spirit, when separating from the body, sustain! Ah me! does she lament, and is there none to have mercy upon her! Does she

turn her eyes to angels, and does she supplicate in vain! Therefore, my beloved brethren, let us seek peace for our departed brother. I called to mind the words of the prophet, who said, I am dust and ashes; and again, I contemplated the grave, and behold the bones divested of their flesh. Is this, said I, a king or a beggar—a just man or a sinner? But do thou, O Lord, give rest to thy servant among the just," &c. &c.

This is a specimen of what occupies about an hour; but the most solemn of all is when the near relatives give the last kiss. This is the manner in which the priest addresses them:—

"Come, my brethren, let us give the last kiss, the last farewell to our deceased brother! He has now forsaken his kindred, and approacheth the grave, no longer mindful of vanity! Where are his kindred and friends? Alas, we are separated! Let us pray to the Lord to grant him repose. Oh, what a separation, my brethren! Approach, embrace him who lately was one of ourselves! He is delivered up to the grave! He is covered with a stone! He sojourneth in darkness! He is buried among the dead! Therefore let us pray unto the Lord to grant him repose. What is life? A flower, a vapour, the early dew of the morning! Approach, therefore, with attention; let us contemplate the grave! Whose now is the graceful form; where youth; where the brightness of the eyes! where

the beauty of the complexion! All, all are withered like the grass; all are vanished! Come, and let us with tears fall down before Christ. What lamentation and wailing, what sighing and struggling, when the soul is separating from the body! Shades and perdition are disclosed. Life is the shadow that departeth; a dream of error; the fruitless labour of imagined existence! Let us therefore fly from the corruption of the world, that we may inherit the kingdom of heaven! When the awful angels have torn the spirit from the body, then the kindred and acquaintance are remembered no longer; then the future judgment alone engages our attention! The vain pursuits and fruitless labours of life are at an end! Let us supplicate the Judge, and beseech him to forgive the sins of the deceased. See, all the members of the body, how motionless! Lately strong with vigour, how are they powerless! Closed are the eyes, the feet bound, the hands at rest! Extinct is the sense of hearing; and the tongue locked up in silence! All are delivered to the grave! All human things are vanity! Brethren, friends, kinsmen, and acquaintance, view me here breathless, and lament! But yesterday we conversed together; the awful hour of death has now overcome me! Come near, all who are bound to me by affection, and, with a last embrace, pronounce the last farewell. No longer shall I sojourn among you; no longer bear a part in your discourse! To

the Judge I go, who is no respecter of persons! The master and the slave; the sovereign and the subject; the rich and the poor; all are alike before Him, and according to their deeds shall they be put to shame or rewarded. Therefore let me beseech you all to pray earnestly unto Christ our God, that I may not be tormented with the wicked according to my sins, but received into the light of life."

During this solemn address, the relations, all in deep mourning, crowd around the coffin, and give the last farewell. The priest then reads a prayer of absolution, and puts into the hands of the dead a paper which is called a passport, containing a declaration of the religious faith of the deceased, and a solicitation for the forgiveness of sins. The coffin is then closed and borne away to the grave.

Never can I forget a scene of this description which I witnessed one bright sunshiny day last August at Petersburg, when stumbling on a funeral in one of the churches, exactly at the moment when the miserable family, in all the bitterness of grief, were pressing round the coffin to bid the last farewell! Every possible circumstance of contrast aggravated the surprise and terror which such an unexpected sight had on my mind. But I must finish my letter in a hurry, for this funeral pace will never catch the post. Besides, I have written myself into a fit of the *blue devils*. Adieu!

TO A. M. C.

Troitskoe, 21st March, N. S., 1806.

THIS sheet of paper lay expanded before me yesterday, and I thought I was going to answer your letter, dearest A., which I received at Moscow, and which struck joy from my heart like the touch of Moses at which the rock in the wilderness overflowed; but when I attempted to write, such mournful groans issued from my pen, that a winter's night through a key-hole, howling a requiem to a shipwreck, could not have sounded more shrill, more injured, more plaintive, and more desponding, than those accents, which would fain have roused your compassion, had I not jumped up from my desk and called to Eleanor to unpack my trunk, and move the furniture into proper places, and make the usual distributions and arrangement after our return from Moscow.

Eloquent must that expression be which could convey a just idea of the sufferings of a Russian journey! From the constant passage of merchandize on the roads, they are ploughed up into rocks of frozen and refrozen snow, over which you must drive, flumping from a mound into a proportionate cavity. In these dreadful holes one sometimes remains jammed for twenty minutes together, whilst the wretched horses, falling with the exertion of dragging us out, are lashed up again and again by dozens of people and servants, who aid in supporting either side of the carriage. Besides the

coach in which Anna Petrovna and I had the misfortune to be crammed, with pillows, writing-cases, and one of the dogs, there were eight other conveyances; so that, when they were all drawn up in a half moon before the door at Moscow, we wanted only a few elephants to give the appearance of an Indian army. But added to the corporal sufferings, the buffets and bruises, the sickness and intolerable fatigue we anticipated, we were in no humour to quit Moscow, at least for six weeks to come.

I speak of Anna Petrovna,* M., and myself; for as to the princess, dear woman! she was only suppressing the radiance of her joy at the thoughts of returning to Troitskoe, which for herself she would never quit—making her yearly visit to Moscow, as a sacrifice to others.

We were not only, indeed, in no humour for plunging into this icy Arcadia,—we were worse; circumstances of aggravation encircled our prospective; and as we gloomily slunk back in our carriage, drawing up the windows, and frowning upon every passing object which awakened a sense of our misfortunes, neither of us deigned to give utterance to them: a sympathy too strong for expression bound us in mute and mutual dismay. Even the churches had lost their power of inspiration on my companion; and the large sign of the cross which she so fervently repeats in the midst of joyous conversation, was, on passing these

* The Russian designation of Mlle. Istlainoff.

stupendous edifices, now sluggishly condensed on her forehead; nor was her favourite saint, hung upon her neck at baptism, where he had ever since maintained his place, once raised to her lip in deprecation of the untoward chances which might befal us.

Careless as it would seem of the state of our minds, a last effort of pride in the hearts of our postillions, as they flourished out of Moscow in triumph, plunged us abruptly into a hole with such violence, that frowns and tears, crossings and liqueurs, sorrows and packages, saints and pillows, lamentations, sliced tongue, cake, hartshorn, and lap-dog, were all blended in one crash!

Silence being at length broken by each endeavouring to save her individual bones from such a fate:—"*Eh bien, ma chère amie, pour l'amour de Dieu, êtes-vous en vie?*" was the first groan electrified from my companion, as she scrambled from this confusion; to which a responsive groan echoed a hollow "*Non; je meurs tout à l'heure, et toutes mes jouissances en ce moment ressemblent peu aux plaisirs terrestres que nous regrettons la bas à Moscou.*"

The repetition of such adventures as these was all that diversified our journey during twenty hours; for whether they travel night or day is a matter of indifference to the Russians, from the utter impossibility of meeting with accommodations on the road. The mildness of the weather however, prevented our suffering from the cold of the night; and an aurora borealis, aided by

the whiteness of the snow, conducted us through the dark hours, and brought us to Serpoukoff, where we found our usual refuge in the wooden house which the princess has built for her own and her friends' use. We did not leave it till Wednesday evening, in the midst of sleet.

The country, dreary, flat, and swathed in endless snow, was lost in the foggy clouds and mists of a wild and distant horizon. How deplorable winter is, uncheered by human animation! To us, Nature seemed laid low in her winding-sheet, never to wake again. The black interruption of mournful woods, cold and leafless, marked our approach to the solitudes of Troitskoe, which at length announced itself in the midst of darkness, on passing the church, by the smell of incense and sound of loud thanksgiving of the priests for our safe return.

We found M. stretched in state on a sofa—she having arrived with the princess before us—in all the solemnities of indisposition. She has got a violent sore throat, and they have been ransacking the house for remedies. She has been in bed ever since, though now perfectly well; and scarcely a moment has that excellent princess stirred from her side.

* * * * *

There is an earnestness of countenance and manner in all the princess says and does, which, with her strange mixture of languages, adds greatly to the *naïveté* of her character, and interests and amuses me beyond description. Speaking to me this morning of this place, which she absolutely

delights in, after scrubbing the windows with the skirt of her great coat to get a glimpse of the view, she exclaimed, "Now, I pray you, dear sister Kaiety, admire with me my beautiful Troitskoe. Look, have you seen or in Italy, or in France, (mais c'est un très vilain pays,) même en Angleterre, a ting so perfect as cette superbe prairie à l'autre côté de la riviere? Tell me out true, is it not un vrai paradis?"

"Indeed, princess, I see nothing but snow; it was very green and pretty last October; but I can discern nothing, absolutely nothing of what you speak."

"Cependant, ma chère amie, avec votre esprit, you might give de seasons changing upon earth! Mais passons la dessûs; die trees demselves will make dier leaves significant soon, and you will confess que jamais, jamais, nor for graces, nor for perfections, dere exists not so charming a place in die world as Troitskoe; and pourquoi, mon enfant? I did make it myself; I worked with die masons at die walls; I put in die little trees in dier holes; 'twas mine own hands done dat. I draw die plans; and tousands of my peasants helped with dier hatchet; I was not then rich as I am now, and so I did make die economist en tout plein de choses."

25th March.—I don't know what I was going to tell you the day before yesterday, when the princess came wandering into my room from M.'s, with a large orange rind in her hand, and a most beautiful necklace, composed of four strings of very fine oriental pearls crammed into it, which she bade me tell M. the apothecary had sent her for her throat.

The conceit of this rejoiced her to such a degree that she did not cease for some time glorying and abusing every physician upon the face of the earth, and striding about the room laughing, or rather crowing, at her having satirized them, in sending pearls instead of pills. I want to know whether these trifles give you any idea of her.

But to talk of something else. I had best at once whisk you back to Moscow, and take you to the top of the highest tower there, whence the view is most beautiful, most extensive, and most striking, to give you a glimpse of the splendid scene which we went up to enjoy about a fortnight ago. This tower, Ivan Velikà by name, is a distinguished feature in the Kremlin, rising amidst its fortifications in the centre of Moscow. The armorial bearings of the tributary provinces of the empire decorate its encircling walls, and the imperial eagle extends its golden wings among the glittering crosses which top its thousand churches. The river, passing like a silver crescent through the town, presents a radiant line of the most vivid animation. Here on its frozen stream, round and round a course marked by green boughs, the fiery horses of Livonia, Tartary, and Arabia, driven by cavaliers in little shells of traineaux, bound along in dazzling rotation; and there let your eye follow, if it can, the successive groups which from the tops of the elevated ice mountains are hurried to the bottom with a force and rapidity which flying can alone give an idea of. The remoter part of the river is cut open into

trenches, where lines of washerwomen bend over to wring their clothes, unconscious of the cold. Here, too, baskets as large as huts appear above the surface, containing the winter's fish, plunged to a considerable depth beneath; and each proprietor weekly visits his watery prison, provident of the impending fast.

Innumerable circumstances concur in giving Moscow an Asiatic air, beyond any other town in Europe. The crescent glitters beneath the cross on every tower, symbolizing, as it were, the triumph of Christianity, and mingles among the yellow globes of gold which blaze amidst the sunshine. The gaudy belfries open to the day; the metal copings; stupendous palaces guarded by sculptured monsters, and environed by palisades; theatres, arches, hospitals, convents, intervening gardens of great extent, public and private, comprehend a mass of varied and splendid imagery peculiar to this ancient capital.

Nothing is perhaps so extraordinary as the appearance of the churches, whose walls outside are covered with representations of gigantic saints in a back ground of radiant gold. Before these daubs of sanctification, thousands of people are seen blessing and prostrating themselves with an ardour more belonging to idolatry than religion; then rising, they halloo to their horses, whom they had for a moment left, and drive on their cars, heaped with blocks of ice, to the cellars of the nobles, a provision for the ensuing summer.

As I have taken you up to the top of Ivan Velikà, let me now conjure you down again to Troitskoe, to repose a little with us in our feudal state; for if you will have my opinion of the matter, Russia is still in the fourteenth or fifteenth century. Yes! I know all about the luxury of Moscow, and the civilization of Petersburg; but have you never seen a clumsy, romping, ignorant girl of twelve years old, with a fine Parisian cap upon her head? So seems to me this imperial realm. A few centuries will no doubt produce the same effects here as they have on other parts of Europe; but time must disengage the ligaments which bind the plant, before it strengthens and expands into a self-supported standard;—too sudden means would bend it to the earth:—and so of Russian political liberty and civilization. But what business have I to shake my ears over the world, as if I held it in my clutches like an apple, elaborately to prove that the rosy side is sweet and the green side sour.

I will take you down into the hall, where dozens of slaves are waiting with their offerings of bread and salt, to greet the princess. When she appears, they fall down before her, and kiss the ground with that senseless obeisance which stupefaction shews at the approach of superior power. Her lenity makes their lot better than that of most, but that is saying very little for the system. Each noble is omnipotent; he may be either an angel or a devil. The

chance is on the latter side; and it must be almost an angel indeed who is not spoiled by the possession of uncontrolled authority. I look upon every noble as an iron link in the massive chain that manacles this realm; and as to the individuals among them whom I have met at Moscow, it is impossible to be in their company without recollecting that they are themselves subjects under a despotism. In the judgments of most, it is not too much to say that *bad* and *good* appear synonymous with *disgrace* and *favour*. The idea attached to what arises from character usually gives place to office; and the exterior of deference can be calculated by the court almanack much better than by the chronicle of merit. If I want to know the virtues of a Russian courtier, I anticipate the answers I should inevitably receive by gazing on his coat, and viewing those four cardinal and most immaculate virtues—the red ribbon of St. Alexander, the blue one of St. Andrew, the decoration of St. George, and that of St. Volodimer. The warmth of favour which emanates from the sunshine of the throne mollifies the destined bearers of those distinctions to receive the imperial stamp, whether the impression it make be on a serpent or on an ass.

The effect of all this upon manners is sufficiently apparent; and inasmuch as people are always most tenacious of precarious possessions, so are the noble Muscovites, whose abode at such a distance from Petersburg tacitly bespeaks a *something* which

dims their lustre as *sparkling* gems in the imperial diadem.

Pooh! let us talk of something agreeable; for do not I hear you exclaim, "why so unwilling to leave Moscow?" In spite of what I say, then, there exist a thousand *agrémens* to recompense for the want of attractiveness, or the apparent insincerity, of its society: for example, in its amusements, the extraordinary diversion of the ice mountains and the traineaux courses, the animation which enlivens the dead of winter, the singularity and picturesque effect of its costume, the dryness of the climate and elasticity of the air, the stoves, the baths; these are things I delight in. I do not often enjoy the ice mountain diversion, it is true; but I walk about every day before breakfast, and as regularly after dinner as I can.

Monday, 24th March, 9 o'clock.—I am just come in from the garden, which looks as if it were worked out of a diamond, such is the beauty of the frost sparkling in the morning sun. I have been visiting the hot-houses, which are blooming with roses, geraniums, lemons, wallflowers, and fruit-blossoms; and I have been endeavouring to say a few words in Russ to Theodore the gardener; but on this subject I continue hopeless.

In the midst of dinner yesterday the courier arrived from Moscow, and brought me home dispatches. I will not now worry you with messages; but I know that it is a satisfaction to hear that

letters arrive. Do I appear unnatural in not commenting upon the events mentioned—upon deaths in particular? It is because three months must at least intervene before an answer can be received; when an untimely comment lifts up the tombstone of the dead only to disturb the repose of the living, without thought, object, or consideration. Long, so long have I transferred my compassion from those who die to those who live, that I am doubly provident of their peace and tranquillity. So now no more will I add, dearest A., to this long epistle.

TO A. C.

Troitskoe, June 26th, 1806.

* * * * Why, don't you remember that I am no longer in Italy or France, and that the only variety which awaited me this year was to be looked for in the occurrences of three petrified months at Moscow? But there were so many circumstances which acted as a blight upon our amusements there, that little entertainment could be expected for the benefit of absent friends. The few letters I did write were certainly destroyed, at least those I addressed to Lady M., by an abominable little Russian master of M.'s, who pocketed the postage, and lit his pipe with the history of my adventures, such as they were. Conceive, then, how electrified my nerves must have been at the receipt of your last letter, which asks novelty from me, as if I had only to spread my wings and soar across the Ural moun-

tains, to pick up all the treasures of Siberia and lay them at your feet; or, as if possessing charms of supernatural sway, I could control the watery goblins, or oblige the wizards of the streams to lay open their mysteries, and impart to me the secrets of the deep.

To be 'sure, I could scarcely have passed a spring in Russia without forming some little acquaintance with these latter crystal gentry, who are reverenced in the village ballads, and who still mingle a fearful superstition even with the reformation of the existing faith. But how could I dare impart the rites of the great *Perrour*, who in the Sclavonian ages stalked through sacred forests, shook the earth in storms, spoke in thunder, and for the infringement of a single observance, exacted the retribution of human sacrifice! No, no; too much of his terrific influence still exists in every waving field, and murmuring stream, and grove, to check all indiscretion of my lips in hazarding a single word. To appease his wrath, though masked beneath some other motive, many are the village offerings of food and chaplets which I have seen on the graves of the departed; and to deprecate the vengeance of his emissaries, who visit the neglect of the dead on the weeping survivors, many is the handful of earth I have seen grasped from the tomb, and bound upon the breast of the widow and orphans, whose affliction is smothered in the dread of those injurious spirits who wrestle for the soul of the deceased.

The female spirit who haunts the streams, and paints the butterflies and flowers, is a being less formidable, from the loveliness of her voice, and the vivid green of her long tresses. This goddess, who reigns triumphant in the minds of all the peasants, is called *Rousalka*. She is seen combing her verdant locks, and weaving garlands from the fairest blossoms of the spring, which she often hangs amongst the rushes; and in these moments she is heard to sigh at the approach of mortal footsteps. Her nymphs wander about the groves and fountains, infusing charms into every stream, which serve to influence the tide of human life, and foretell the future to her votaries.

I could not imagine what it was which so strongly engaged the attention of a group of young country girls, whom I one day observed gazing on the river as they slowly walked along its bank. On a nearer view, I perceived garlands of corn-flowers, which they had flung in, and which, according to certain symptoms or bubbles in the current, were inevitably to predict the fortunes of the ensuing year.

Whilst I am on this subject of witchcraft, I must inform you that not a child is born who is not at its birth encircled by a party of envious and malignant fairies, who watch with virulence of feeling every step which points to worldly success or pleasure. I was walking in the garden some time ago, and could not help admiring a lovely rosy little baby who lay in a basket, tied, as is the custom here, to its mother's back. I exhausted

all my words of Russ in calling it pretty, good-humoured, &c., when what was my confusion to see the mother, with a look of agonized concern, strip the child, and lick it over from head to foot, making signs to me not to interrupt the ceremony. I began to fear she might have taken me for the devil; and being only friendly in my intentions, I disappeared amongst the bushes with as much precipitation as possible. On turning into another walk, I met the princess, to whom I recounted my adventure, and who easily explained it by saying, that the poor woman fully believed that the phalanx of the fairies who hovered about the child would surely punish it in proportion to the praise it received; and, consequently, to repel their malign influence, she licked away all that might embellish it, as the only means of averting the revenge and jealousy of its inveterate foes.

Sunday, the 27th.—I have been poring over your letter for some question to answer, and to gain a new impulse away from the old woman's stories of the foregoing page; but without effect. It is clear you expect answers without the usual provocative of a question; and I doubt whether you will be satisfied unless I go in quest of some natural curiosity to hang up in your brain as in a museum; such, for example, as the skeleton of an elephant, which you would probably wish to see me dragging at my heels from Northern Siberia, as a proof of what changes the world has undergone in latter ages. No, no, my

dear A., I must talk nonsense to you, or else hold my peace for ever; or if you fix your affection on rarities beyond my reach, you must supply me with wings, and fins, and web feet, besides half-a-dozen senses more, and ears and eyes by hundreds, or else I shall never be able to satisfy your love of wonderful curiosities and miraculous impossibilities.

I observe in your letter, and with mute amazement, that you were diverted with a story I told of our drives last winter through the woods in the snow. Grim and livid as they then were in cold and nakedness, the scene is now reversed into all the bloom and diversity of spring and summer. After our morning's bath, and before breakfast, we now drive into these said forests, which present a succession of vivid beauty and fragrance. There are two kinds of plant, one the *belle de nuit*, another whose name I forget, both resembling the lily of the valley, but more beautiful,—which, with heaths, strawberries, wild pinks and roses, matted together with a sort of moss, embellish these woods, forming a carpet over the whole ground. I know your passion for flowers, or I should not think of thus enamelling my letter like a garden, instead of talking to you on reasonable subjects.

This week has been one of infinite dissipation to us all; the house has been full of company; and amongst the visitors was a favourite nephew of the princess, with his wife and little daughter. For our amusement one evening, we drove to a part of this

estate which the princess had not seen during the last eight years. As she was not of the party, her nephew proposed that we should surprise her with a *fête champètre* in this wild part of her grounds, and in the most romantic spot imaginable. It was necessary to clear it from some entanglements, in order to bring out its natural beauties, and make it a fit *locale* for the purpose in view. The peasants, therefore, of the village *Yarshova*, as it is called, were in secret let loose, together with some servants, for the necessary preparations; and in four days our arrangements were complete.

During this time, each of us, at hours when our absence would be least noticed, drove in succession to superintend the work. For my part, I continued there all the mornings; and having long established a rule never to appear till dinner, my absence was of course not remarked. We contrived so to turn a little stream as to form a cascade tumbling down a natural rock. In some places masses of stone were drawn together, a large space was sodded, seats were scattered here and there.

At length, when all was in order, the princess was decoyed to the spot, where to her infinite astonishment she found herself seated at a collation of fruits, creams, &c., encircled with villagers in their gala dresses, bearing garlands, and singing and dancing before her.

I believe I described Troitskoe to you as a dead flat; and so it is within a considerable circle round the house; but this *Yarshova* is a little Switzerland,

preserving the same picturesque character to an extent of four or five versts. Since this adventure, we have all been very urgent with the princess to bring this pleasing feature of the country into keeping and communication with the chateau, by winding walks, and seats, and other appropriate embellishments; but the princess retires within her shell, says she is too old, and protests that Troitskoe, as it is, is an earthly paradise. M. has at length, however, gained the battle, and the princess, we have just heard, surrenders at discretion.

I will now deliberately throw this aside for two days, as the post will not go out before Thursday, and letters &c. may arrive by that time.

Wednesday night, June 30.—Oh, the agitation which letters produce in my frame! No less than three have I received from the two houses; they have been my supper to-night. You talk of influenza; we have other matters at your service. What do you think of the *plague* being at Kiow? and though at first I got a shock about it, at present I find it is little more than talk. Adieu.

TO THE REV. J. C.

Troitskoe, Oct. 14th, 1806.

We will now wander towards the hallowed tomb of the canonized Demetrius, the patron saint of the Worontzow family, whither we bent our way from Moscow with the princess, the second week in August, blazing in an atmosphere of thirty-three

degrees of heat. At Moscow, however, I must pause a moment,—where in reality we remained eight days,—to familiarize you a little with the change it has undergone in the summer season. Least perhaps of all towns in the world does it resemble itself as it is in winter, when the unclouded stars of a northern sky, shining over the sparkling snow, and the whitest moonlight, brightened every object as we used to drive on our way home from our winter orgies. Now indeed the yellow rays of perpetual sunshine reflect from its gilded domes, and balls, and spires, an eternal and painful dazzle through the livelong day.

Torment is a word which but faintly expresses what my brain endured from the unceasing ringing of bells. And as to flies, and buzzing midges, and poisoning musquitoes, no southern country that I have visited can surpass it in such persecutions. Let me, however, render the justice due in other instances. Its boulevards and public walks during the summer evenings are enchanting; and you may form some idea how much it deserves the title of *Rus in urbe*, when I tell you that, amongst other spacious gardens attached to the residences of several nobles, there is one consisting of no less than fourteen English acres belonging to the palace of Count Ostroman, in the very centre of the town.

The flower-market, too, for the luxuriance of its produce, may vie with that of London or of Paris. Fruits are in the most profuse abundance; which is not surprising when one recollects that hot-houses

here are almost a necessary of life, and constructed on the most prodigal scale. Their water-melons are celebrated for their prodigious size, as well as their refreshing quality, and make their appearance in the very nick of time to allay the thirst of this sultry season.

Before I quit the subject of fruit I must do honour to the beauty of the Siberian apples, which are quite transparent, and of a larger size and finer flavour than any others I am acquainted with.

So far for a *snack* before you set out on your pilgrimage; and were you amongst us *bears*, you would not be permitted to stir an inch without partaking of a *déjeuner dinatoire*, where smoking pies, fish, caviar, and other trifles, are supposed to make no further impression on your memory than what may lawfully be forgotten at the expiration of an hour's drive.

Well, then, as I said before, we left Moscow on the 11th of August, in the evening, accompanied by two squires, relatives of the princess. After travelling forty-three versts northwards, through a delightful country, embellished by an occasional imperial residence, several beautiful country seats of the merchants, and some stately chateaux of the nobles,—among which was a celebrated one of Count Razoumoffsky's, encircled by a forest, and bounded by a river,—we passed by the grounds of M. de Mouronzoff, and of Prince Galitzin, dressed to the water's edge, and reflected in blue lakes, all gay with boats, and swans, and floating bridges. At length we arrived at Madame de Nibalsin's, where we were

engaged to pass a short time, before proceeding to the convent of Troitza, the Loretto of this country, whither we were first bound. Here we found a gay assemblage of the princes of the land, with music, banqueting, and other entertainments, to greet our appearance. This lady is a brisk, a very brisk widow, living like a queen upon her fine domain, in the midst of gardens, shrubberies, and pleasure-grounds, laid out and kept according to the English taste.

Baths, hot-houses, dairies, an English farming establishment, stud of horses, dwarfs, and various improvements imported from other countries, occupied our time and attention the following morning.

After dinner, we all drove out in open carriages to the neighbouring village, Kuapakna, to visit the manufactory of Prince Yousoupoff, where shawls and silks of a beautiful texture are brought to great perfection—those specimens of furniture which we saw in the looms appearing nowise inferior to what I remember at Lyons. The prince holds this manufactory under certain conditions from the crown. He employs seven hundred persons, and is accountable for all damage done to the buildings and machinery. This, however, is not the whole of his immense concern; he has a fabric of paper under his direction, and one of watches, as well as, I believe, of some other articles of workmanship.

The following day happened to be the day for blessing the waters; and nothing could have a more

theatric effect than the sight which opened upon us as we drove from the door, in continuation of our journey. It was the procession of priests, exalting their golden crosses, waving their holy banners, holding up their various saints, and followed by all the inhabitants of the village in their gala trappings, walking round the water's edge, which they consecrated by various forms and ceremonies, in one full chorus of religious music.

Before arriving at the monastery of Troitza, fifty-eight versts were yet to be accomplished; but happily the greater part of the way was shaded by forests, and enlivened by a continuation of many beautiful residences, such as I have described—each with its attendant church, the usual appendage of every Russian mansion, and its detached belfry towering above the dark foliage of the trees, and reflecting the sun's rays from its gilded dome, cross, and ball.

The lines of these forests were occasionally broken by yellow plains of corn, in all the luxuriance of harvest, whilst the sides of the roads were everywhere enamelled by an infinite variety of wild flowers, giving an inexpressible gaiety to the scene.

We travelled that day and night, and did not arrive at Troitza till four o'clock the following morning. Here, instead of occupying a little wooden house of the place which had been assigned us, we had our carriages converted into beds, and slumbered as we could, under the protection of a prodigious shed,

where all the vehicles of every sort of visitor were placed without ceremony, and all the horses belonging to them neighed, kicked, stampt, and floundered to their hearts' content.

Alas! this is getting a little behind the scenes; for to a British carcass the grievances of a Russian journey in winter, or in the dog-days, are such as to exhaust the utmost powers of patient endurance.

A carriage full of cooks and kitchen utensils always preceded us; so on this score we had nothing to complain of. We had even a butler in our train, with a sideboard of plate. Such are the incongruities of our travelling arrangements!

When at length we had opened our eyes on our quadruped friends and bedfellows, they were soon turned to the contemplation of the ancient monastery, which rose before us in all its Gothic grandeur, amidst those battlements which once guarded the retreat of Peter the First, when, by the wise counsel of his sister Sophia, he there took refuge from the rebellion of the Strèlits.

Though Catherine the Second curtailed the revenues of the brethren of this monastery, by depriving them of seventy thousand peasants, for which a very trifling compensation from the crown was made, yet no inconsiderable income is derived from the swarms of pilgrims who come to visit the miraculous shrine, and kiss the crumbling bones of St. Sergius. When Princess Daschkaw presented herself for this cere-

mony, the coffin was opened by two priests, who, on her approach, began to repeat a mass before the tomb, offering her the cross, and then a withered, shrunk, black finger of the saint, to kiss. As for the body, nothing was to be seen but a swath of crimson embroidery, and a wooden head, bearing on it a radiant crown of precious stones. Within its shrine, canopied with golden brocade, fringed with pearls, trophies are hung around of orders and portraits, set in brilliants, imperial cyphers, and various baubles of worldly vanity. Such are the objects which adorn the sanctuary of one who was canonized for their renunciation!

The present Archbishop Plato, one of the most celebrated men in Russia, is the superior of this establishment. He is a mixture of everything opposite to the religious character and political constitution of his country; yet in respect to the former, he so keeps up to the outward forms as to awe the populace and inspire a sort of veneration for his person; and with regard to the latter, he is of so much consequence, from his influence and cleverness, as to be held in the highest consideration at court, and universally esteemed as a master-wheel in the machine of state.

After being well smoked with incense at the shrine of St. Sergius, where miracles are said to be daily performed, we were conducted by a party of black-cowled monks to see the treasures of the monastery. These are exhibited like the curiosities

of a museum, in several rooms, the walls of which are lined with glass cases, where all the vestments, to the number of at least five hundred, the coverings of the altar, (into the web of which some particles of the relics of a saint are usually interwoven,) the sacred vessels, and all the penitential offerings of a crowd of sinners, are ostentatiously set forth, forming a gorgeous display of oriental riches and luxury. There are some chalices, presented by Catherine the Second, of the most exquisite materials and workmanship—one, for example, cut out of an onyx, enriched with diamonds; another formed from a single blood stone, with base and handle of opal; and several of pure gold, inlaid with pearls. On the robes of the priests I observed a little ticket, and found, on inquiry, that it contained the number of pounds' weight of pearls on the embroidery of each robe, sometimes eight, sometimes ten, and sometimes twelve pounds.

To relieve our eyes from all these radiant maskings of idolatry, we mounted up the highest belfry, to gaze upon the widely-extended beauty of the surrounding country; and amongst the picturesque objects within our view, none was more attractive than the hermitage of Archbishop Plato. This we afterwards visited. But to continue the account of our pilgrimage. The following morning, after starting by cock-crow, and travelling thirty versts, we encamped during the heat of the day in the wooden village of Kiribiriva, in the government of Volodi-

mer, where we reposed our high mightinesses for the space of four hours in a barn; while on the borders of the skirting wood a fire was kindled under the blue vault of heaven, and our dinners handsomely dressed. During the time we had slumbered on the hay, our damsels, armed with green branches against a host of flies, were waving them over our weary heads. As soon as the heat had a little relented, we drove on thirty versts further, and slept that night in the famous town of Perisloff, situated on the still more celebrated lake of the same name. Here it was, on this beautiful sheet of water, reflecting the starry firmament of this clear blue sky as we entered the town, and bordering its edge with a glittering rim of silver light, that Peter the First essayed his youthful hand in those arts which were afterwards made subservient to push his country to a partial, perhaps premature civilization.

The next day we travelled sixty versts further, and arrived at night at the holy town of Rostoff, where, according to the custom we had observed on former occasions, all its principal men, dressed in their robes of office, came out to meet the princess at the gates, and, riding by the side of the carriage, conducted her to the door of the cathedral, where we alighted, and bustled through a dense congregation to the silver tomb of St. Demetrius. After a few prostrations, on the part of the princess, before this object of our journey, orders were given to the

priests to have masses said the following morning, when the princess would return at ten o'clock to salute the relics, and perform the rest of her devotions.

If you are half as tired of these canonized old gentlemen as I am,—and well may you mutter, "it is not your fault if I am not,"—you will be quite satisfied without a repetition of a ceremony which the princess underwent, very similar to the one I have already described. I am sure you had much rather see the massive doors of the cathedral shut, and make one of a very diversified group, which the archimandrite penetrated through to reach the princess, and offer her the hospitalities of his palace. This most respectable dignitary, with his unshorn locks waving over his shoulders, with grisly beard, and habited in the floating robes of his order, conducted us to what we figured to ourselves might be his cell, when what was our amazement in beholding decorated roofs, Italian frescos, suites of the most sunny and elegantly-furnished apartments, imperial portraits reigning on the walls; and before a crimson canopy, under which the princess took her seat, a table, covered with a variety of dainties, which we were invited to partake of by our venerable host, whilst tea and coffee, cakes and chocolate, were handed to us by his attendant monks, bustling about in their long monastic hoods, and winnowing the air with their floating garments.

Now, having regaled you in the cloister of my archimandrite, if you have a mind to return with

me again to Moscow, you will revisit all the localities already noticed, with greater circumspection; and after an absence of nine days, which our pilgrimage consumed, you will drive with me to the chateau, whence we took our departure, in dust, drowsiness, confusion of brain, hunger, and thirst.

In a few weeks we shall again mount the stage at Moscow; and now I must bid you adieu!

TO H. W.

Troitskoe, Oct. 21st, 1806.

THE adventures of our summer campaign have been already told; and what is now to be hoped for, unless imagination could lend her aid to diversify the outline of our every-day habits of life? But that is a power not over-active in these northern spheres. And if this remark be true in respect to persons, it is no less so with regard to their productions in print. Since the days of Tom Thumb, never were there seen such doleful attempts at composition as are to be found in some few works of fancy, the translations of which I have lately seen. For several months I had been anxious for some books of the country; and one has been just given me, so celebrated, as I was told, that it had been translated into all languages; but I protest, in the version of it I have seen, the most deplorably affected English novel that ever dissolved the heart of a

mantua-maker, was Shakspeare in comparison of what I found it. So what is to be done? As to the conversation among the junior bears, it is all about their paws and tails; and that of the married gentry is uniformly about their family affairs and expenses. Every woman, you must know, is here wholly independent of her husband in regard to fortune. Marriage, therefore, is no union of interests; for the wife, who has a large estate, and happens to have married a poor man, is still considered rich, whilst the husband may go to jail without the power of touching a single rouble of her possessions. This peculiarity gives a singular hue to the conversation of Russian matrons, which to a meek English woman appears wonderfully independent in the midst of a despotic government.

At first I thought the men bewitched, when, in the circle before dinner, a snuff-box or a tooth-pick case has been exhibited as the gift of their wives on such a jour de fête; and the wives in like manner gravely boasting of having received a present from their husbands of a Turkish shawl, an embroidered reticule, an ear-ring, or a bracelet. But I was still more surprised when a lady was asked for, who had not yet returned to Moscow, and her husband replied that she was making some inquiries on her estate in the Ukraine, which she had an idea of selling, from the extreme inconvenience of the distance which separated it from his. So that when a party of matrons are found talking together in a

group, affairs are the usual burden of the song, except when a more coquettish dame attracts the general attention, by the exhibition of a diamond wreath or necklace, which you are immediately informed cost so many scores of slaves.

This letter has been lying some days in my desk, and I never recollected it. What I was going further to observe I have also forgotten. Since I have therefore quite snapped the thread of my discourse, I will speak of the first subject that pops into my head, and that is a Georgian prince, whom I saw at Moscow last August, after our return from our pilgrimage, at a grand entertainment, given at the emperor's expense, in the Kremlin.

The object of this fête was to celebrate the laying of the first stone of an academy by the Governor-general Beckleshoff, on his going out of office—an honour which had been assigned him by his successor General Tutelman. M. de Volowieff, the director of the public works, had tents erected for the occasion, under which all the lords of the land were assembled, together with the archbishop and the clergy, who performed the religious part of this ceremony by a prayer of consecration, and other offices of the church, the conclusion of which was announced by a burst of military music from several bands, and a roar of cannon from the fortress.

In the midst of this tumult, I was struck with the appearance of a group of Georgian figures in their picturesque dresses, girt about the waists with

Turkish shawls, wearing yellow boots, and their hands covered with diamond rings. They were brought up to the princess to be presented to her; but their performance on this occasion was awkward enough, from not being acquainted with the customary forms of salutation. Some of these were princes tributary to Russia, just brought to Moscow on parole. Their country has been long under the imperial yoke; but the chief of these, a haughty, turbulent, daring-looking, mustachoed savage, had headed a revolt, and uniting himself with the Persians, was taken in arms fighting against the Russian power. His son, a fine youth of seventeen, who was with him, was remarkable for the extremely melancholy expression of his countenance; whilst the father, on the contrary, appeared to enjoy the novelty of the scene around him, full of curiosity, and inquiring of his interpreter the meaning of everything that passed; at the same time shewing by his demeanour the most proud consciousness of self-supposed superiority. I was interested and amused in contemplating this captured chief, with his Asiatic retinue, as they sat opposite to me at a brilliant repast, which terminated the day's festivity, viewing them through the spreading branches of some fruit-trees which shaded all the table with a most refreshing green.

There is one little story for you; and now for another, also about an entertainment. It was one given by M. Durassoff, in compliment to the princess, at his most beautiful of country seats, seven-

teen versts from Moscow, two days after the one I have just mentioned. This little man inherits untold wealth from his father, who was a possessor of Siberian mines; and the place he dwells in is in truth an earthly paradise. As we drove towards the house, it had the appearance of a marble temple, from the first story being supported by marble columns, with the exception of the centre portion, which rises into a lofty dome, and serves as a banqueting room, with a vaulted ceiling decorated with allegorical paintings. The company were assembled within the colonnade, which stands on a basement of marble steps, covered with all the luxuries of the flower-garden in full bloom and fragrance, and skirted by a green lawn sloping to the water's edge, shadowed with trees.

From every point of this delightful place some new variety presents itself, in a fresh combination of its beautiful features; shrubberies and lawns, groves and lakes, hills and valleys, in gay confusion, with the glittering cupolas of Moscow terminating the view.

I will not dwell on the luxuries of the table; though everything passed as in an enchanted palace. After dinner, we wandered about the grounds in parties, till evening brought us together again, and to the theatre, a necessary appendage to every country place of distinction. His own slaves, to the number of at least one hundred, appeared on the stage and in the orchestra; and though a ballet was danced between the play and after-piece, and

everything went off admirably, a thousand apologies were made for the poorness of the performance, as the harvest, it was alleged, had taken off almost all his people, and it was impossible to assemble more than the few we saw. The theatre, in fact, and the whole decoration, were extremely elegant, and the acting most respectable. At intervals, trays containing fruits, cakes, lemonade, tea, liqueurs, and ices, were circulated among the audience, and aromatic perfumes were burnt throughout the evening.

Well, if you are not yet sleepy and tired, I am; and so, dear H., good night.

I am glad I did not send this before, as I have just received my father's letter and several others, which it is most satisfactory to be able to acknowledge. With regard to my return, I cannot now enter into further particulars than to say, that after talking over the affair with the princess, she most kindly offered to conduct me to the water's edge at Petersburg. This I cannot permit, as such an expedition would be a complete sacrifice on her part to my convenience. I have therefore suggested Riga, as a journey thither might combine some object of business on the way, which she wishes to accomplish. So stands the matter at present. If nothing occur to prevent it, I think, about April, we shall set out for the confines of Poland, visit the princess's estate at Krouglo, and so through Courland make the best of our road to Riga; and thus I shall escape the horrors of the Finland Gulf.

And now, having room to spare, I will supply what was omitted in a former letter to some of you, which described a peasant's marriage. The preparations of the day preceding the ceremony made no part of that story; and these you shall now have an account of. You will find them more curious than you may be inclined to think, as presenting vestiges of a very remote antiquity. There may be traced, indeed, throughout most of the national customs of this country, in their village amusements, their superstitions and auguries, and even in their musical instruments, a strong similarity with the Greeks in these matters, and thus pointing to the origin of their civilization. It is impossible not to be struck with this resemblance; and perhaps it is one of the most interesting circumstances arising out of a Russian tour, to witness in the peasantry of the present day a living picture of those distant ages with which our earliest associations are so much connected.

The instance which I am going to give you was in the marriage of Sophia, M.'s femme de chambre, which was celebrated here the other day with infinite éclat.

Although I had attended several weddings in the church, I never before had courage to suffocate myself in the cause, by assisting at those preparatory ceremonies of which the vapour bath is a very important one. I was nevertheless determined before I quitted the country to witness them; and

therefore, here goes, for the operation from beginning to end.

The bride elect, dissolved in tears, sat at the head of a table spread with fruits, &c.; when the bridegroom approaches, presents her with the *toilette*, and then quickly disappears, being conducted by his companions to his bath. This toilette consisted of every necessary article of such an appendage which he can afford, together with rouge and white paint. A group of girls then set up what sounded a sort of *requiem*, called *Pesni Swadbachnia.**

As I was curious to understand the meaning of this, and as you may have the same fancy, here is a translation I had made for me of one among several which these girls sang, at the highest pitch of their voices :—

"On the top of a lofty mountain dark with forests,
Were seen a flock of wild geese and a group of swans;
A young cygnet strayed in among the geese,
Who began to peck at her, and drive her off;
On which the young cygnet cried out aloud,
Treat me not so, in pity; for it is against my will
That I find myself where I am; and nothing but
A tempest could have forced me in amongst you!
Alas! this is the picture of our dear Sophia, her
Whom we are now about to lose; who, finding herself
Entangled amongst a group of hymeneals,
Weeps with bitterness, and like the young cygnet,
Treat me not harshly, she cries, for it is against my will
That I come amongst you, good people, but it is
The kibitka and the horses of Timothy which force me hither."

This is a specimen of the sort of allegorical com-

* Wedding songs.

positions remaining in their Sclavonic dialect, which have been sung time out of mind, the change of name only being necessary to make it appropriate on all occasions.

We afterwards attended her to the bathing-room, with all her young companions, amounting to between thirty and forty girls, who assisted in undressing her in another chamber, and then led her, still in tears, naked into the bath. The attendant nymphs having taken off their own clothes also, and performed the usual ablutions, scouring the bride elect to her heart's content, began to dance around her, clapping their hands, and drinking wine, which was dispensed by another Eve, who sat with a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other, her long tresses falling down about her shoulders, which with the others was the only covering they could boast. This was followed by a song, in which all but the bride loudly joined. Here is its translation:—

"A wild pigeon, dipping itself in the sea,
After fluttering its beautiful pinions, cried,
How can I quit the waters? how can I soar
Above the high and rugged mountains? But
The cold of winter comes: its frosts will penetrate;
The snow will cover all the ground. In spite, then,
Of myself, these waters I *must* quit. I must quit
The dangers of these rugged shores. In this manner,
And with these reflections, our dear companion Sophia
Bathes and paints her face with red and white, and blackens
Her eye-brows all like jet, and afterwards exclaims,
How can I quit my father! how my dear mother leave!
In spite, then, of myself, I quit my father;
In spite, then, of myself, I say—adieu, my mother!"

The bath scene lasted about an hour, and at length became the most festive scene imaginable. The attendants coloured themselves for sport in the most ridiculous manner, singing and dancing like a troop of Bacchanals, while the bride continued mute, and for the most part in tears.

On being conducted back again to the house, she again took her place at the table, whilst her companions sung as follows:—

"Here, then, begins the marriage of our dear Sophia;
We all stand with her about the table, and even take
Honourable places; but she is herself above us all;
Although 'tis she herself who makes the humblest bow
To her companions, whilst she ruminates
On serious thoughts, which do not yet torment
Our joyous hearts. How, indeed, she thinks,
Can I reflect without tears on the idea
Of a severe father-in-law; how on that
Of a severe mother-in-law, whom I must call,
Spite of myself, 'mother;' else she would be offended.
Oh, how must I trample on my pride, to call
Father-in-law 'father!' mother-in-law, 'mother!'"

After several trifling ceremonies, the whole affair ended in a handsome supper; and the next day the couple were married. And so ends my paper and letter.

TO A. M. C.

Moscow, Feb. 2nd, 1807.

SHOULD I ever be delivered from the whale's belly of the Baltic, I give you full licence to charge me with the postage of this letter; for however I

may be urged by gratitude or other virtues to write for the sake of acknowledging letters of yours, yet in the present sloth and sorrowing of my spirit, motives of so murky a nature draw me to you, that no creature but myself ought in justice or humanity to be *taxed* with my own company. This murkiness which I complain of, you must know, is not the effect of mere ill humour, but of real illness, which has unmercifully preyed upon my nerves for several days.

But oh, this miserable house! No doubt the deplorable event which has turned it into a sepulchre will have reached your ears long before this arrives—the death of Prince Daschkaw! I will not attempt to describe the aggravation of wretchedness which this unexpected catastrophe has given occasion to. Indeed it would be impossible, and as cruel as unavailing. I will therefore pass over the scenes of desolation which have lately darkened, in tragic succession, upon our senses.

Feb. 3.—When I wrote the above yesterday, it was professedly with the object of alleviating the pressure of my own heaviness of spirit; and nevertheless I have thrown obstacles in my way, by renouncing the idea of any recapitulation of the detail of our deathsome existence. One effect of this misfortune, fruitless as it may be to allude to it, is the absolute destruction of our castle-building, on the possibility of what appeared to M. and me some time ago practicable, and what would have been a surprise to you all had our plan succeeded, of her

accompanying me home next spring. This has been a thousand times the subject of our speculations; and as her absence was to be for a limited time, the scheme appeared extremely feasible: but the death of Prince Daschkaw has utterly put to flight any such pleasing dream. Oh that she was not so necessary to the happiness and existence of the princess as she evidently is!

Feb. 14.—In order to change the scene, we are going to accompany the princess on a sort of pilgrimage to a celebrated convent, called New Jerusalem, fifty or sixty miles from Moscow. In the meantime I have been preparing my heavy baggage to be sent by sea from Petersburg, that I may be as little encumbered as possible on our Polish route. How I dread the cold and damps of Ireland, after the artificial atmosphere of these most comfortable stoves! One scarcely knows what cold means in these houses; and when felt out of doors, fortified with shubas and other wrappings, it has the vivifying effect of a glass of champaign. You will hardly believe me, when I declare I was more inconvenienced by the Italian than by the Russian winter:—but so it is.

Are you about to deny, that I never contradicted the fact of there being trees in Russ-land? Never; nor that there was grass, nor water, nor earth to boot! But in good earnest, the vegetable constitution of this land seems to countenance their slavish policy; for birch is indigenous in this soil, as sham-

rocks are in Ireland, or vines in France; and so generally is this acknowledged, that the birch is commonly distinguished by the title of the Russian vine. Now, are you answered? The forests are indeed remarkable for the beauty of their productions, for the magnificence of the firs, and for other timber trees, in common with us; and I never saw in any shrubbery, however pampered by careful management, greater and more luxuriant diversity than in the wild woods of Russia. But to return to the birch; I wish the genius of the soil would apply it only to the vices, and not to the subjugation, of its inhabitants; and how many might then tremble at its aspect?

Do not, for the expression of this pious wish, consider me a scandal-monger, and fancy that my own propensity to vice would lead me to blacken the very virtues within my own immediate orbit. No; for though circumstances have sometimes reached my ears which reflect no credit on some of the nobler sons of Odin, yet it is not for me severely to criticise the nation amongst whom I am sojourning, much less to infer that such cases afford a fair specimen of national character; for the Russian peasantry are the most kind-hearted beings upon earth, the most innocent and guileless.

Talking of nationality and of the peasants, would you like to hear of some of the Christmas games with which the young people of that class amuse themselves on Christmas-eve? Figure to yourself,

then, a party joined hand in hand, taking their places in a circle round a bowl set on a table, or, if you prefer it, a caldron, like the witches in Macbeth, but without a fire under it. Into this machine a bit of bread, some salt, a little water, and a piece of charcoal being thrown, to "make the gruel thick and slab," as the charm for what is to ensue, another vessel is placed over it, as the depository of the pledges of those who wish to try their fortune. This is so covered as to allow the pledges, such as a ring, a key, a snuff-box, to be slipped in unseen. During the former part of the operation, the performers dance round, singing a chorus, of which the following is a literal, not an elegant, translation:—

Glory be to God in heaven. Glory!
Glory to our empress on earth. Glory!
May our empress never grow old. Glory!
May her flowered gowns never be torn. Glory!
May her good horses never be past labour. Glory!
We have also sung for the bread. Glory!
For the bread we have sung and done it honour. Glory!

Then commences the drawing of the lots, which is done in this manner: one sings a song, meant to describe, in a rude sort of allegory, the fortune awaiting the owner of the pledge, which is drawn out by some blindfolded Cupid of the party from the upper region of the bowl, at the moment the song ceases. Immediately follows the chorus, joined in by all:—

For whom we have sung
Good luck! good luck!
Thus shall it soon be for her
Whose lot is drawn.

Here, for your further edification, is half-a-dozen of these mystic songs, with the fortune they respectively denote:—

The blacksmith goes from his forge,
His shuba is rent and torn;
One side is worth a thousand roubles,
The other only a hundred.
Chorus—For whom, &c.

This promises riches.

Away skips the mushroom to the fir-wood,
To seek a white lady mushroom;
'Tis not a mushroomess we seek,
But a lady of high birth.
Chorus—For whom, &c.

A marriage for convenience.

As on the oak-tree two doves are fled
Into each other's embraces.
Chorus—For whom, &c.

A love marriage.

A pike quitted the white lake,
She trailed her tail to Novgorod;
Her skin is silvered o'er,
Her tail and head are burnished gold.
Chorus—For whom, &c.

A foreign marriage.

An orphan is seated over the warm ashes,
This orphan waits there to pick up crumbs from the oven.
Chorus—For whom, &c.

Misfortune.

Now the bear swims
Across a rapid river;
After swimming he shakes himself,
And shakes off a bushel of fleas.
Chorus—For whom, &c.
Great good luck and riches in abundance.

This is the grand prize of the evening, and reserved for the last-drawn pledge. I have made it one of this elegant selection, to shew that the same superstition respecting the above-named vermin, in dreams and sorcery, exists in this country as in Ireland. I know, indeed, a very charming young person, with the title of excellency, who is in the utmost delight whenever her washerwoman happens to enclose a flea amongst her clean linen.

With regard to those popular games which fashion has now banished from the saloon of the great to the peasant's cabin, the princess told us that she remembered, in former times, having taken part along with the empress in the fortune-telling adventure which I have just described. It was probably before Catherine the Second came to the throne, when, as grand-duchess and a foreigner, in order to ingratiate herself with the nation, she might wish to appear not only to adopt its customs, but to patronise even its popular superstitions.

* * * * Our Polish scheme will certainly be perpetrated in spring; and on beholding you and my sisters again, I shall do you the justice to say that I have not met your rivals in my travels, to my mind.

God bless you. Tell Ellen's people she is in rude health, and speaks Russ with the most enormous brogue. * * * *

* * * * We are here at Moscow kept shamefully in the dark as to politics, and live in a constant fermentation of falsehood, and growling against Petersburg. The princess wrote the other day to the young empress, and spoke in the most affectionate and recommendatory terms of M.

* * * * Have compassion on me and write, and believe me stupid, phlegmatic, and not well; nevertheless, ever yours, BRUIN!

TO A. L.

Moscow, May 15th, 1807.

You are the very Cato of your sex, all the world over, sweetest lady, and have, through the virtue thereof, applied all your principles of moderation, justice, and truth, as interpreters to my silence, rather than the vile exaggerations of jealousy, which has only to cast its own discoloured shadows to darken me into a delinquent. But esteeming you as I do, I could no more render myself a real delinquent in your mind than you could ever prove a green-eyed monster in mine; and though months have intervened since your delightful letter arrived, yet so faithfully have I preserved your impression within my thoughts, as faithfully as it lies before

me on the seal* of that letter, that it is to indulge my own garrulity, and not to satisfy your tenacity, if I now recapitulate the sundry and manifold obstacles which have risen like mountains between me and my pen during this long interval of silence. If, indeed, I had written one syllable within the last four months, it would only have been to draw you within the pale of misfortune which has darkened this devoted house since the death of Prince Daschkaw. You may conceive the effects of such a loss on this family; but I should be sorry you should suffer so far as to witness, even in imagination, the scenes which it has occasioned. To perpetuate the name of Daschkaw to the latest posterity has ever been the foible, if such it can be called, of his unhappy mother!

One bright circumstance, however, has beamed out from amidst the horrors of his loss; and since it promises to be of a consolatory nature to this household, I will keep your thoughts a moment longer on the Daschkaw family. It will doubtless appear strange to you, to learn that a new personage has appeared upon this scene, in the character of the young Princess Daschkaw; but so it is. Twenty years ago, at the age of fifteen, she entered into the honours of this treacherous life, by a splendid marriage with the head of this family, which was very soon afterwards converted into a

* A Minerva's head.

dreary monument, in which this long period of her existence has been silently consumed. I will not attempt to unravel the circumstances which led to their first estrangement and final separation; but it would appear that her devotion to Prince Daschkaw continued unabated; and one of his latest acts had been to make such a provision for her as might secure her worldly independence, should she survive him. In an agony of grief, on receiving the news of his death, she is said to have torn the paper which conveyed to her that portion of her husband's property which was destined for her support, and thus was left almost wholly dependent on the justice or benevolence of the prince's heir-at-law, his sister.

It was now for the first time that the princess wrote to her, giving her letter in charge to Madame de Noroff and Countess Woronzoff, who kindly undertook its delivery in person; and who, setting off in the midst of snow and hurricane, reached her place of retirement, and conducted her, more dead than alive, to Moscow, a few weeks after the death of her husband.

Conceive the meeting of the two princesses for the first time in their lives, and their first link of sympathy being struck by their common bereavement! But this I will pass over, as well as our fears and misgivings, lest the memory of the past might too much occupy their thoughts, and revive some bitter feelings, to the injury of the present. Suffice it to

say, such is the young princess's sweetness of nature, her rectitude of conduct, and unceasing desire to please, met as it is on the part of Princess Daschkaw with the most affectionate feeling, and kindest exertions for the benefit of her daughter-in-law, that their present union promises to be a source of mutual consolation, perhaps of happiness. The Princess Anne occupies apartments under this roof, and will remain our inmate till October, when she is to remove into a beautiful new house in the neighbourhood, which has been purchased for her by the princess.

* * * * Had nothing else existed as the cause of my long silence, my own personal indisposition would have been enough to account for it, in all conscience. Don't I therefore, at this moment, hear you making civil inquiries about my health. Well, then, in reply, I can with truth assure you, that at present I have only to complain of pitiless colds in the head, which, though they ought to strike compassion from the rocks, will meet with little sympathy with those of sturdy frames, and like you, O Cato, of adamantine heart. But O! how are such creatures to be envied by one who is beginning to feel herself doomed to trundle through the pilgrimage of life with a deplorable drag* upon the very wheels of her existence!

* * * * Well, well, hearken! For I am not going

* An incipient asthma.

to moan over myself, but over a cruel disappointment, which the circumstances that occasioned it must at present smother into silence, in respect to the inmates of this house, but in which you will have a kindred feeling, I am perfectly aware. It is on the subject of M.'s returning with me, and paying a visit at home; but the death of Prince Daschkaw has plunged our schemes into one common abyss, fatal to the hopes of all this household. In a revolution of a nature like this, M. could not think of separating herself from the misfortunes of her friend; and the princess openly protested to me, as well as to all around her, in an agony of tears, that she could not survive her separation from one whom she considered as her own child, and the strongest tie which held her to this miserable life.

So ends this affair for the present; and as it is the greatest sacrifice that could be made by M., so much the more she pleases herself, even in the bitterness of any act that can prove her affection and self-devotion to the happiness of the princess. But she is the heroine of a romance; and it is only I, grovelling luggage of mortality that I am, who groan like Caliban in darkness, pinched by unknown fingers, and intolerable cramps! Like Caliban, too, I lie in saying what I do, for I can rear myself up above my disappointment, and crest my judgment high aloft in momentary approbation. You will see me then, sweetest lady, in a short time; you will see me and Eleanor returning upon your shoulders, like Hudi-

bras and Ralpho after their adventure with the bears!

In spite of all our woes, the dear princess has turned Anna Petrovna, M., and myself, headlong out into the gay processions and galas which mark the period of spring, whose approach becomes an object of religious worship. The remnant of pagan ceremonies, if I may venture to say so, are so mingled with the practices of the Greek church, that I am beginning to be afraid we have been solemnizing, without our knowledge, some of those very May-day ceremonies which scandalized old Cato two thousand years ago, amidst the runagates of Rome,—who preferred, as all the world knows, their blackguard saturnalia to his sage advice.

But do not be alarmed; whatever the origin of these processions may be, we, in common with the rest who took part in them, never budged out of our carriage, wedged in as it was amidst a long file of gallant equipages, and keenly looked to by a score or two of mounted policemen, who capered at our side.

But the senselessness of those practices! Why, if you had suddenly dropped down from another planet during Easter week, and seen the whole town crowded with coaches and six, stuffed full of ladies and gentlemen in almost court attire, you would have imagined that all Moscow had gone mad. But should you ask what all this means, I do not believe the essence of Muscovite intelligence could furnish you with a reasonable

reply. I will not tease you, therefore, with describing the courses which we had nevertheless the dulness to repeat for hours together, whilst we had left the princess at home, regulating and arranging her cabinet of natural history; which, after lying untouched in trunks nearly thirty years, she had now caused to be unpacked for the first time, in order to make a present of it to the university of Moscow. As its museum is extremely poor in the sort of specimens she had to offer, it is a most judicious destination of what may be called the fruit of her travels.

The princess has in fact, of late, in this particular, as in many others, been acting as if she were already dead. Is this a bull? If so, excuse it. Legacies of what she wishes to exist as monuments of her esteem, she has already given in advance; amongst which, some have been sent to the emperor, the empress, and to the empress mother; and in return, letters of the handsomest acknowledgment have been received.

This will give you an idea of the channel in which her thoughts run, respecting her own life; and though in my opinion, as well as in that of her friends in general, there is no symptom of its being brought speedily to a close, yet all this is very melancholy and depressing. We are now waiting the arrival of young Count Woronzoff, a fine young man between sixteen and seventeen, whom the princess has appointed her joint heir with the son of her brother,

the ambassador in London; and who, if the emperor permit, is to unite the name of Daschkaw with his own. As soon as his visit is concluded, we shall remove from Moscow, and then my return movements commence.

I am just come from dining with a Moldavian Hospodar, married to a niece of the princess, whose long beard, shawl girdle, yellow boots, and Turkish costume in general, have the whole afternoon realized some of those pictures of the East whither my imagination has been roaming with Madame Cottin, in her enchanting romance of Mathilde. Surely I risk nothing in saying it is the most beautiful French novel that ever was composed. In compliment to the authoress's reputation I have read also Claire d'Albe and Elisabet. The latter is founded on a true story, and consequently interesting; but the other is a sort of female Werther, most intolerable to contemplate.

17th May.— * * * * The post-office plays one such slippery tricks that, with regard to some letters that I have written, and some that I ought to have received, I am beginning to lose all faith, hope, and charity. After such a confession, it will be prudent to vanish as quickly as possible from your view, thou most august and best of censors.

To say that you are one whom I love sincerely, will be a still further trial of your indulgence. But be that as it may, I must boldly say it, and further declare the grief I should feel, were you not disposed to pardon all my transgressions, and to drop a briny

tear over my destiny, should I be wrecked on the Swedish or Danish coast; and, through the process of marine transmigration, be fastened by the finger of fate, in the shape of a barnacle, to the bottom of a trading vessel sailing to the Cove of Cork; there, doubtless, to be scraped off for the benefit of Mr. Hinks and his students, and to find a long repose in the cases of his museum. Still, whatever be my doom, let it not be forgotten that I am most grateful for your past affection; which, with that of the rest of your household, adds both to memory and anticipation one of the greatest pleasures of my impending reappearance in the land of my forefathers.

TO A. M. C.

Moscow, June 16th, 1807.

* * * * My departure is the motive to various little excursions at present. Every evening we drive into some part of the beautiful environs of Moscow, and wander amongst the improvements of Neskushna, Astanka, Tzaritzen, and others more delightful than I can describe. The convents and monasteries also, which are encircled with walls and turrets like ancient fortifications, are no less objects of our examination.

The celebrated one of Donskoy, proudly domineering over the city, was the last where we paid our devotions. Here we took our lemonade under the shade of the weeping birch, peering through its branches over the yellow domes and gilded crosses

of the Kremlin, which blazed beneath us in magnificent splendour.

Orloff's garden is delightfully situated on the slope of a mountain, broken into a variety of walks, and hills, and dales, and precipices, and adorned with all the usual embellishments of baths and temples.

The bark of the birch tree is much used in many of these out-of-doors edifices, giving the prettiest effect imaginable, as if the buildings themselves were erected by the hand of Nature. Thanks to the English gardeners who come over, the Dutch taste is universally declining; thanks indeed, I may say, to the English, German, French, or Swedish, where everything of tasteful effect is of foreign importation.

The princess has most good-naturedly entered into our whim of *rummaging* for Russia in the purlieus of its ancient capital; and as the merchants as well as the peasants retain the usages of former days, she *ordered* (for that is the proper term to use) a Russian entertainment to be given at the house of Elic Alexovitch, a well-known merchant of great respectability, and a sort of patriarch of the *Roscolnic* sect. He is a fine portrait of human nature at the advanced age of eighty; simple, cheerful, active, and benevolent, with large, bald, shining forehead, handsome features, and long, silvery beard, on a majestic height of stature, rendered the more striking by his ancient Russian attire. This man was born a subject of the Dolgo-

roukys, but having contrived to purchase his freedom, and carrying on for many years a thriving business, is become the wealthiest of his class at Moscow.

Notwithstanding the costliness of his board, and the gigantic dinner over which he presided as host, I admired him infinitely more in his patriarchal capacity, as founder and director of the religious establishment around him. He took us to his churches, and convents, and hospitals, forming a spacious circle near his own mansion, and explained many of the peculiarities of his sect. The chief differences between them and the national church appear to consist, not so much in any dissent as to the great articles of faith, but as arising out of an idea that the church books and ceremonies now used by its authority have been changed at some period or other, and that in consequence, several heterodox opinions and practices have been introduced.

But the word Roscolnic, I believe, includes dissenters of every denomination whatever, of which there are a great many shades and varieties in Russia. I have heard indeed of one, which is said to make it a point of duty to procure amongst themselves a first-born male child of a woman who has never been married, and to eat its flesh and drink its blood at the sacrament! How seldom one is recompensed in the gratification of a prying spirit of curiosity in any other way than by the discovery of some new monument of human folly!

But how could I have written to the end of this page without venting my rage against one of you, I forget which, who wondered to the greatest degree at my never mentioning the armies, or the political situation of Russian affairs. Wonder, indeed! You may just as well wonder at my not speaking Chinese or Arabic! Why, there is not one human being in this imperial realm capable of giving the smallest information, ay, or of receiving it either, who has not been hermetically sealed, for at least these eight months, against the possibility of either one or the other.

Petersburg, July 15th.

There's for you! Look at the date, and you will find that a month has passed since I wrote the above. I will leave you to guess the circumstances which occupied me during the period previous to my departure, and will only take you back to Sunday, the fourth of this month, which was the day we quitted Moscow.

The princess, with M. and me in her coach, the Princess Anne, with Anna Petrovna in hers, the maidens in their respective kibitkas, and Eleanor in my carriage, together with Ivan Alexandrovitch, the trusty police-officer of the princess, and all the servants and Cossacks in their respective vehicles, our attendants on the way. Thus did we advance by slow degrees to the beautiful convent of Voskrivinsky, the new Jerusalem, where Melchisidec, our

gallant archimandrite, received us with his accustomed hospitality, and conducted us to the palace within its walls, which had been formerly fitted up for Catherine the Second. It is a privilege, let me observe, belonging to a lady of honour, and of the portrait, to occupy on a journey any imperial residence, not otherwise disposed of, which falls in her way. Here then we were lodged, and the worthy archimandrite gave us tea, gave us hay to spread under our feather-beds, gave us his blessing, and left us to repose.

The following day we visited the beautiful environs of this monastery, accompanied by the archimandrite in his summer pelisse of gaily embroidered damask, driven along with us in his droshka; and after dinner we proceeded to Klin, ninety-two versts on my way, and there we slept.

It had been the princess's determined resolution, in spite of all my entreaties to the contrary, to have seen me to the water's side, either at Petersburg or at Riga; but her late mental sufferings had so increased her bodily ailments, that this intention was at last necessarily abandoned. That I should be accompanied thus far on my journey was, in fine, the compromise agreed on. Here then, Tuesday, at Klin, was the doleful day and place of our separation; since which I have written so many letters to the princess and M. that I will now pass it all over, as if there had been no woe or sorrowing on the occasion at all.

Having taken leave of the princess as had been

agreed, but without taking a formal one of my sister, I seated myself in my carriage with Eleanor, and with two of the princess's servants on the box, Kusma and Antoine, we darted off over the wooden roads, as fast as four horses a-breast could carry us, followed by the trusty policeman, Ivan Alexandrovitch, in his kibitka, with our provisions for the way.

On Sunday morning, 11th of July, we stopped within a few miles of Petersburg, at Tzarskoselo, the noble palace built by Catherine the Second, which I took the opportunity of inspecting. We arrived here in the afternoon, at the house of the Baron d'Hoggier, who was Dutch minister at this court in the time of the above-named empress. The baroness is niece of Princess Daschkaw, and an old acquaintance of mine. Her husband I knew very little of before, but there is about him an apparent benevolence and worth, shining through a somewhat rough exterior, which is highly prepossessing. He is a great castle of a man, with large features, an agreeable countenance, and full of good sense.

This is the fourth day since I came here; and so much have I had to do, and to say, and to think of, that this letter, half finished as it then was, must serve to all the dear home-party as the forerunner of my arrival. I am to go down in a barge from this door, (as the house is situated on the Neva) on Friday, the 23rd of this month, to Cronstadt, where I shall step into my old berth on board of Captain

Clark's ship the "Good Intent;" the same which brought M., and the same in which I came to Russia.

There, now; how easily I can give you in two words the result of what has cost me so many plagues and negotiations, and note writings, and tormentings of half-a-dozen of my acquaintance.

I found here my ancient friend, Mr. Cavanaugh, that invaluable being for active exertion in everything which could forward my affairs.

Last night we spent in the country, fourteen versts hence, at the Duke and Duchess of Seres Capriolo. He is the Neapolitan minister. We met all the grandees of Petersburg; and a dance, a concert, and a balloon, made the amusement of the evening. We had a soirée the day before at Countess Woronzoff's, after spending the whole morning in flying after sights.

We have passed several hours in the celebrated palace of the Hermitage, so much loved by the Empress Catherine, where the picture gallery is superb, and where "les loges de Raphael" have been so beautifully copied, and appear, as most people think, to greater advantage than the original frescos in the Vatican.

Certainly this city is magnificent. Since my last visit, an iron bridge of a single arch has been thrown across the Neva, a new manège has been built, and they are now at work on a new exchange, and are lining the quays with granite.

Yesterday, peace between the emperor and Bona-

parte was announced. This house is just facing the fortress, whence the cannon roared all day; and illuminations were dimly burning all night through the town. I know not whether these are to be taken as demonstrations of real satisfaction or not; but if they are, they are only a proof that old Bruin is transformed into a jackass. But I shall certainly be chained to a kibitka, and sent into Siberia, if I don't hold my tongue; so pray let us talk of my return.

If I make as good a voyage as I did in coming, I may be in London by the 20th of August; but a letter which I have had from Captain Clark tells me he has often been detained in the Sound six weeks. If that should be the case, I shall surely swim to Copenhagen; and being an old soldier, I have already provided myself with letters to that place, for fear of accidents.

I have had many letters from the Princess, M., &c., and my hand is cramped in answering them. This interruption has made me forget what I was going to tell you more. The Baron and Baroness d'Hoggier have insisted on taking me themselves to Cronstadt, and establishing me on board ship. It is a comfort to feel as if M. were at my heels; for, you know, everything is ultimately arranged for her return next spring.

It seems to be the general observation here, that last night's illumination for the peace was demonstrative of the public sentiment; and if so, no great approbation can be augured, for it was as shabby as

possible. As we drove through the streets, it gave me the idea of Death in Milton, when "he grinned horribly a ghastly smile." But Russia is a blubber-cheeked boy, who, to get a holiday, would risk a threshing. This peace I look upon as little better than a short interlude, and in my opinion Bonaparte has the rod in his hands.

Every one rails against the English, for being such dilatory allies. The *ignoramus* majority, which is as nine hundred and ninety-nine to one, snarl against England. The few lay all the blame on the opposition principles which were at the helm; but *all* the bears, to a *cub*, grumble at us. Conceive the state of ignorance I am in about politics and public affairs! I never see newspapers; they are and have been long prohibited, and I hear nothing but the mushroom lies of the day. These sometimes enrage me to such a degree that I now never ask where the world is rolling to; and I should not be at all surprised, when I go home, to find that Ireland has floated westward, and occupies a place in the other hemisphere. With love to every one,

Most affectionately, &c. K. W.

TO E. W., Esq.

Petersburg, at the house of
Baron d'Hoggier, July 28, 1807.

This is the seventeenth day I have been here, my dearest father; and so deranged have been all my

plans of passing on to England by the first fair wind, that I have been discouraged from even writing home, thinking that what I reported of my intentions by one post would probably be contradicted by the following. The cause which has given occasion to this delay and annoyance is my having left Moscow without a passport; the princess having declared that my padroshna, (the permission to hire post horses,) being duly signed by authority, and published in the Moscow Gazette according to general usage, rendered a passport superfluous.

As M. has written to you since we parted, and I have written to A., I will not go over the old ground, but will continue to relate the exertions which have been made upon this unlucky subject, both by my English and Russian friends. Baron d'Hoggier has been three times with the governor of Petersburg; and our English banker and excellent friend, Mr. Cavanaugh, has likewise never ceased his efforts to bring this affair to a conclusion, but hitherto without effect. The strictness of the government at this time with regard to passports is inflexible. In consequence, I have lost my passage in my old ship the "Good Intent," whose captain most kindly made every delay for me in his power, at Cronstadt; and here I have been obliged to wait, first, till my proposed departure had been, as at Moscow, three times formally announced in the Gazette; and, secondly, till my padroshna and

former passports were handed through different offices, and ultimately lodged three days in the bureau of Count Romanzoff at the College de Commerce; from whence, I am told, they are to be extricated to-morrow.

I should be very ungrateful to the kind friends at whose house I am, did I not add, that this interval has been filled up with an infinite variety of amusement. I have frequently gone to the palace of the Hermitage, and on boating parties on this magnificent river, to the public gardens, the institutions, &c.; and nothing can be more delightful than this town is at this season, by day and by night, if night it can be called, which, at the darkest hours, gives light enough to see to read or to work. All this is really enjoyable; but when one is ajar as to one's movements, every species of amusement seems like an infidelity to one's reigning purpose, and an interruption hardly to be encouraged.

The chief satisfaction, however, with which I console myself is, that I am acting like a sounding line to M.'s spring expedition, and clearing away all the obstacles which might act as embargoes on her return.

I write continually to Moscow, to the two princesses, M. and A. P., and I receive letters from them every post; so as yet it scarcely appears that we have parted. By the princess's desire, I have addressed notes to the Princess Prasoroffsky and Countess Pratasoff, *les dames d'honneur*, to lay my

adieux at the feet of the reigning and dowager empresses, since I could not have the honour of doing so in person, from the uncertainty of my stay.

My kind friend, Mr. C., is just gone to Cronstadt, where all the vessels lie, to look out for one of the best, and to make the final arrangements for my departure.

Adieu, my dearest father.

THE END.

T. C. Savill, Printer, 107, St. Martin's Lane, Charing Cross.

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